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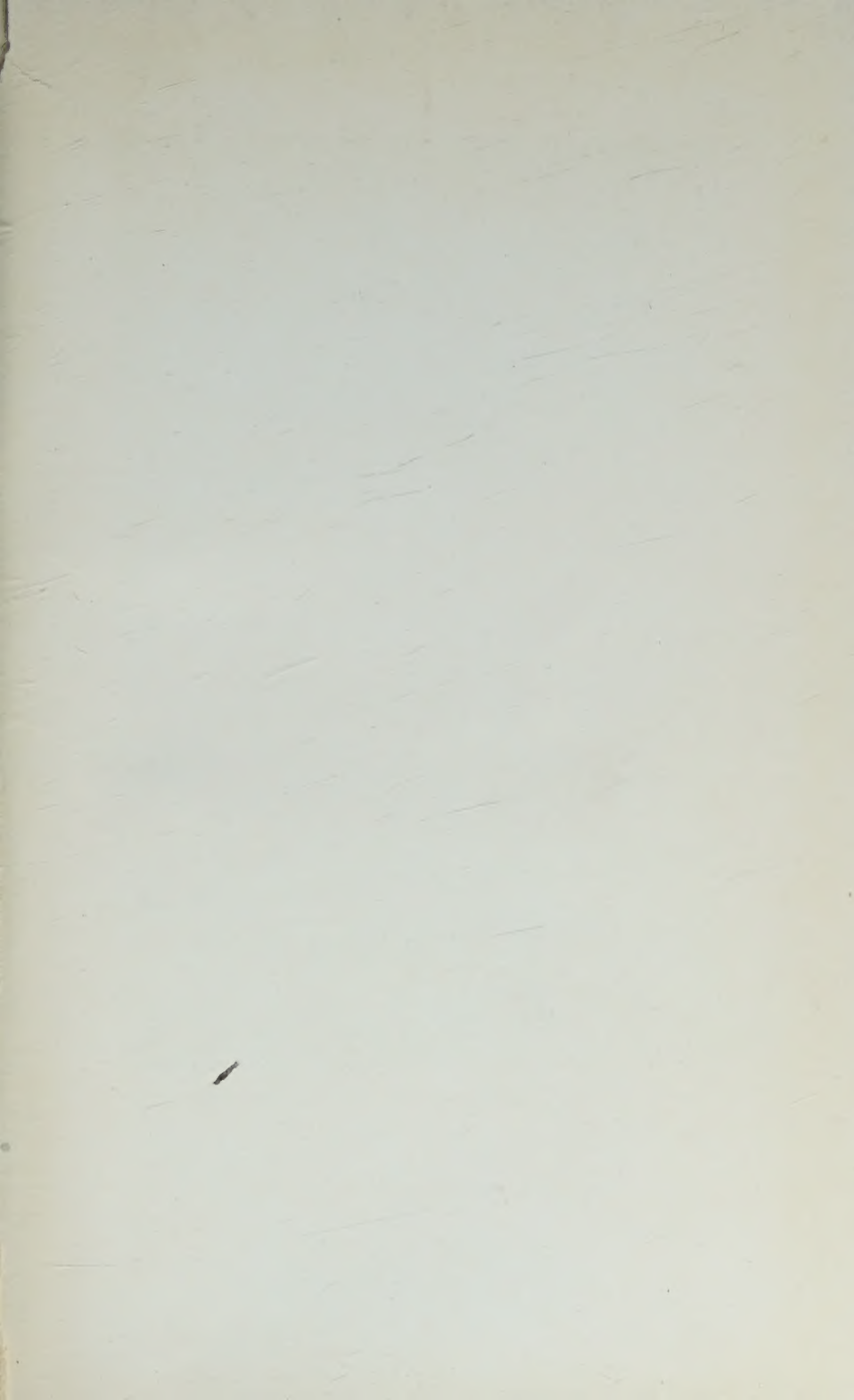
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SEA POWER IN ANCIENT HISTORY





THE VICTORS OF SALAMIS

After the painting by Fernand Cormon. From "Historians' History of the World," by permission of the publishers,
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SEA POWER IN ANCIENT HISTORY

THE STORY OF THE NAVIES OF
CLASSIC GREECE AND ROME

BY

ARTHUR MACCARTNEY SHEPARD

WITH A FOREWORD BY

REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM A. MOFFETT, U. S. N.



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TO
MY FATHER
THOMAS ROCHESTER SHEPARD

THIS WORK IS AFFECTIONATELY

DEDICATED

9/633

“For war, least of all things, conforms to prescribed rules; it strikes out a path for itself when the moment comes. And therefore he who has his temper under control in warfare is safer far, but he who gets into a passion is, through his own fault, liable to the greater fall.”

THUCYDIDES.

“Many men desire honour, but it is only the few who venture to attempt it; and of those who do so, it is rare to find any that have the resolution to persevere to the end.”

POLYBIUS.

FOREWORD

READERS of this work cannot but be impressed by the similarity between the problems of sea power in ancient times and the problems of sea power which are engaging the attention of the maritime nations of to-day. The fundamentals of sea power and their influence upon the political and commercial life of nations, considerations which occupied the best minds of the centuries chronicled in this book, are among the most distressing factors in international relations at the present moment. The statesmen of Europe, Asia, and America are attempting to harmonize the sea power of those continents in an effort to insure a permanent peace and to guarantee continued progress in the development of the complex civilizations of our age.

Why these problems to-day so closely parallel those of years long gone by is because the geographical configuration of the earth's surface is unchangeable. Consequently, the problems of the strategic utilization of the ocean contiguous to the grand divisions of the land always remain the same. Every age of progress brings certain localized national problems but they affect tactics rather than strategy.

It is a matter of interest, if not profit, to study the intimate details of maritime development among the Phœnicians, Athenians, Carthaginians, and Romans, and to note how closely down through the ages those developments have kept pace with the strategic genius of the races. For instance, the Athenians made a fatal mistake in dividing their fleet at a critical period in their history, sending part of it to the Western Mediterranean, thus weakening their forces in the waters adjacent to the Greek peninsula and the Ægean Archipelago. The two fleets were defeated piecemeal; Athenian sea power was practically destroyed. Exactly the same thing would again take place should any present-day power while at war divide its fleet and dispatch small units over the waters of the globe. It was only by concentrating her entire naval forces in the North Sea that Great Britain was able to coop up the German High Seas fleet during the World War.

Had Great Britain maintained separate fleets in Asiatic waters, in the Mediterranean, and in the South Atlantic, she would have had but a small portion of her sea power opposed directly to the German might. The same holds true in our own case. We must maintain a unit which can be immediately mobilized against any force attacking either shore of our continent. Only by the use of the Panama Canal can this be effected in war time. Had that waterway not been built it would have

been necessary for us to maintain two enormous fleets, one in the Atlantic and one in the Pacific.

Those who closely followed the Naval Armament Reduction Conference at Washington and who have examined the treaties resulting from that Conference can readily discern in this recital of sea power in ancient history identically the same considerations underlying the deliberations at the Conference that vitalized the maritime activities of the ancients.

Governing principles in the organization of modern sea power are taken from the history of the ancient naval wars in the Mediterranean. Those principles descend through mediæval and modern history. By neglecting those principles a great naval power like Spain, which for a time dominated the sea lanes of the world, yields to a superior sea power in other hands. Thus it is that statesmen generally have come to realize that any maritime nation which does not maintain a sea power commensurate with its importance in the council of the nations soon finds itself outside the council, from which condition it is but a step to total impotence.

But even more closely to approximate the story of ancient sea power to that of our own age, we find that factors in the design of naval vessels which sprang into prominence in those early days are still important considerations in the design of naval craft. One needs but to mention the ram, the fightingtop, and the ballista, which last has developed into the

long-range gun of our modern battleships and battle cruisers. Even more curious is the fact that the catapult, which in ancient days was used for hurling stones and other elemental missiles, has found a new use in launching airplanes from the decks of our war vessels. In our own navy the catapult has been rejuvenated into a highly important apparatus for defensive and offensive warfare, and the fighting top in such ships as the *Maryland* and the *Tennessee* now serves a varied purpose, fundamentally the same as in ancient days, but brought down to date by the use of radio, perfected optical instruments, and the application of electrical equipment to the conduct of battle.

Then, too, there is no incomparable difference in the speed of present-day battleships and of the capital fighting ships of ancient days. Those many-banked oar-driven ships sped along from twelve to eighteen knots an hour, and our modern battleships do not much exceed twenty knots an hour, although the ultimate speed of these vessels has probably not been reached. Again, oar-driven vessels could maneuver against the wind and during calm weather, which is now the function of steam-driven craft. In these respects, the advent of sails merely increased the range of activities of naval craft, but hardly added to their maneuverability.

So, then, all through this book will be found conditions closely paralleling those of to-day. It gives the work interest and also teaches valuable lessons.

It more than broadly hints that we should be chary of discarding what experience indicates to be sound with respect to utility until we have perfected some new feature which nullifies the older practice.

Mr. Shepard's book abounds in proofs of the fact that sea power since the early days has always affected the welfare of maritime nations. Those developing it gained great prominence and lived long. Those neglecting it suffered thereby. This should be taken home to our own condition among the nations of the world. Our maritime interests must be protected. Adequate sea power alone can guarantee that protection. Even our existence among the first powers of the world depends upon the development of our sea power to a stage which will preclude attack by other nations. The Washington Conference Treaties have placed restrictions on the strength of our fighting force; but other nations entering into the agreement have also restricted their fighting forces. It is our duty at all times to maintain in a highly efficient state the force allowed us by the Treaty. To do less will be to our disadvantage, if not our peril. Mr. Shepard's book brings out this truth in a narrative which traces the evolution of sea power through two thousand years of history.

WILLIAM A. MOFFETT

Rear Admiral U. S. Navy

Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics.

PREFACE

As regards intellectual fitness, the historian must possess two crowning virtues — the one a gift of nature and the other to be acquired only by long practice: to wit, political intelligence, the insight of a statesman, and a capacity for artistic presentation of the truth.

POLYBIUS.

Two reasons, if no other, would seem to justify the writing of this book: first, the absence of any work in English dealing adequately or exclusively with the subject of ancient sea power; second, the intrinsic interest, fascination, and importance of the subject itself.

The writings of Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, and other ancient historians who understood the meaning of sea power, exhale in many passages a breath as from the great deep, a salty tang, penetrating their works and bringing down from the past the vital freshness of the ancient sea life. For one over whom the sea has cast its mysterious spell the story of sea power in all ages possesses a peculiar glamour and attraction. Nor does the tale of the sea fighters of ancient Greece and Rome, of Phœnicia and Carthage — of warfare of galleys threshing

the blue waters of the Mediterranean, beside its temple-crowned shores — yield in charm and interest to other periods of naval history. The importance of the subject lies in the fact that sea power was probably the leading force in molding the classical civilization, of which our own civilization to-day is only an outgrowth and a development.

Though it would gratify the author exceedingly if his work afforded interest or instruction to the noble profession of naval officers and seamen of the present day, he has not planned his work primarily for such persons but rather for the large and growing class of readers who take a lively interest in historical literature, and to whom the glowing theme of sea power in the classical era may, he hopes, bring pleasure and inspiration.

Despite the natural interest of the subject, the author freely confesses that he has found it one of great difficulty to present. Naval history at times flows along in a broad and powerful stream, attracting to it the main currents of history; then again it splits into a hundred separate rills whose combined influence is seemingly slight, if at all discernible. In telling the story of Salamis, of the First Punic War, of Actium, or of other decisive periods of sea history, the naval historian can handle his subject in much the same way as the general historian, since sea power in these periods plays the leading rôle, and on the issue of the naval conflict turns the whole course of history.

But in the long periods following the thunder of decisive battles or campaigns, when the influence of sea power is silent and almost invisible, yet when, as the late Admiral Mahan has convincingly shown, sea power is often most effectively exercised, then is the skill and the method of the naval historian put to the test. He must steer a narrow course between Scylla and Charybdis. On the one hand, he must present his theme in its true relationship to general history; for, taken completely out of its setting, naval history becomes a jejune chronicle, wearisome to narrate and profitless to read. On the other hand, he must abstain from wandering needlessly into fields outside of naval history; only such general facts as are necessary to reveal the true place and part of sea power in the drama of history should be brought into the narrative.

If the naval historian succeeds in disentangling his subject from the mass of general history and in presenting it with clearness and distinctness, he inevitably runs the risk of exaggerating its importance. "Sea history," as Mahan well points out, "is but one factor in that general advance and decay of nations which is called their history; and if sight be lost of the other factors to which it is so closely related, a distorted view, either exaggerated or the reverse, of its importance will be formed."¹

The naval historian in self-defense, however, may fairly plead that his subject is special writing and

¹ "Influence of Sea Power on History", p. 90.

cannot hope to stand alone. What a brilliant French historian says of a much broader historical theme applies even more particularly to the subject of naval history :

“No historical work,” writes Monsieur Aulard, “is sufficient to itself or to the reader . . . but presupposes and demands the reading of others.”¹

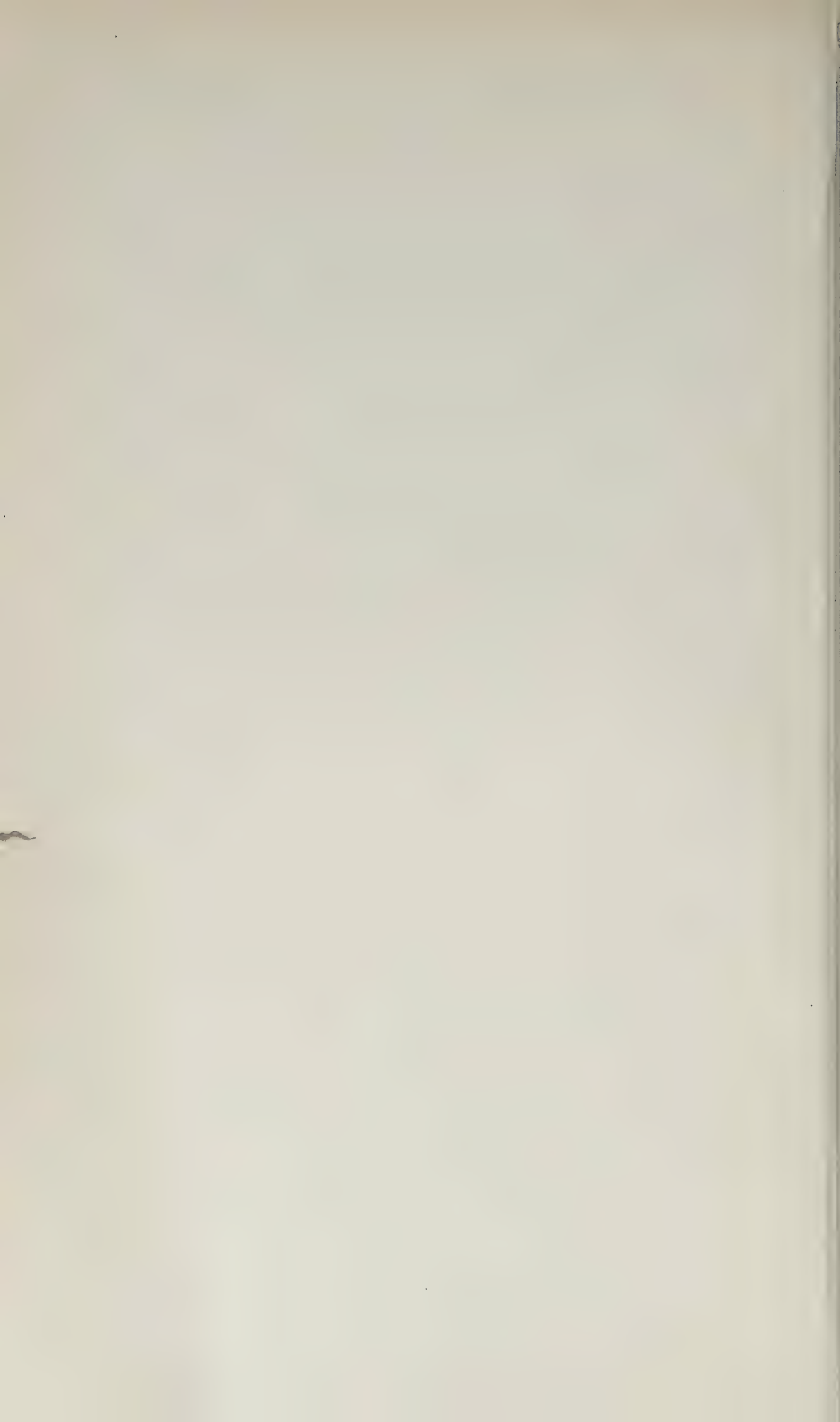
If, in this day of neglect of classical studies, a reader with only the vaguest or with no knowledge of ancient history should pick up this book and persist in reading it, the impression gained by him would doubtless be a distorted one. On the other hand, the author hopes and trusts that those for whom the story of ancient Greece and Rome still possesses significance will gain through the separate presentation of a large and vital phase of their annals a clearer and fuller appreciation of classical history and civilization as a whole.

In offering this work to the public, I take pleasure in acknowledging my obligations to Rear Admiral William A. Moffett, U. S. N., Chief of the Bureau of Aëronautics, for his generous sponsoring of an unknown author's book; to Professor William Lyons Phelps of Yale, Rear Admiral Spencer Shepard Wood, and particularly to Miss Margaretta Wood, for helpful criticism and painstaking reading of the manuscript. Above all, I am indebted to Mr. Clifford A. Tinker, former lieutenant of the United States Navy, for invaluable assistance and advice,

¹ “*La Revolution Française*”, preface.

and to my father, Thomas Rochester Shepard, for unfailing encouragement and inspiration in the prosecution of the work, for many excellent suggestions as to style and subject matter, and for a deal of laborious assistance in the preparation of the manuscript.

WASHINGTON, D. C.,
June 28th, 1923.



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SEA POWER IN ANCIENT HISTORY

SEA POWER IN ANCIENT HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

ANCIENT SEA WARFARE

Maritime skill is like skill of other kinds, not a thing to be cultivated by the way or at chance times; it is jealous of any other pursuit which distracts the mind for an instant from itself.

THUCYDIDES.

For in land fights valor apparently carries the day, when no unusual fortune intervenes; but in sea-fights many and various accidents often occur, which sometimes on a sudden ruin those whose valor would otherwise most certainly and justly have brought them off victorious.

DIODORUS.

SECTION I. WARSHIPS

In the period covered by this work naval science and sea power were still comparatively in their infancy. The ancient Greek and Roman warships of the Mediterranean, though true prototypes of our modern dreadnaughts and battle cruisers, were little more than huge complex rowboats or galleys, abnormally lengthened for the sake of speed, and armed with a sharp beak or ram at the bow for

offense. The chief means of propulsion was oars and the chief motive power was the muscle and energy of hundreds of sturdy rowers. For though ancient war galleys were equipped with masts and sails, these were used only for voyaging with a fair wind behind and were invariably taken down and stowed away before going into battle.¹

Yet crude as such warcraft were, they were used by people after people in the ceaseless struggle for sea supremacy and finally were the means of a single nation establishing its sway over the whole Mediterranean. Working with such instruments the ancient seamen essayed the elementary problems of ship-handling and maneuvers, of tactics and strategy, of discipline and administration, and their solution forms the groundwork of naval science to-day.

The earliest peoples to have warships were probably the Egyptians and the Cretans,² but the Phœnicians were the first people within the ken of written history to make an extensive use of armed sea power. Of the triumphs of their shipbuilders, however, almost no record remains, and their progress in naval science must be inferred from the contemporary progress of their imitators, the Greeks.

The twenty-oared galley was probably the earliest type of sea-going fighting-ship; it was the ordinary

¹ Torr, "Ancient Ships", p. 1. See Appendix I.

² For evidences of an early, prehistoric Cretan sea power, derived from twentieth-century archaeological explorations, see James Baikie's "The Sea-Kings of Crete." (London, 1910.)

war vessel of the Greek expeditionary force in the Iliad, but even in Homeric times an advance was made. By increasing the galley's length a thirty-oared ship or triëconter, and then a fifty-oared ship or penteconter were successively developed. In the effort to increase the speed and capacity of the fighting-ship without adding indefinitely to its length, however, Phœnician shipwrights invented vessels with two, and later with three tiers or "banks" of rowers' benches, superimposed one above another. The bireme, or two-banked galley, though used in Phœnicia in the eighth century B.C.,¹ never became common in Greece; it was soon superseded by the superior trireme, or three-banked ship, which began to be built at Corinth about 700 B.C. and at Samos a few years later.² Thenceforth the art of trireme building spread gradually among the sea peoples of Greece until, in the second decade of the fifth century, the construction of two hundred triremes by Athens turned the tide of war between Europe and Asia.

For over two centuries the trireme was the standard war vessel of the Mediterranean, the line-of-battle ship of antiquity. But with the perfection of the system of superimposed banks of oars, shipwrights were tempted to build additional banks, thereby increasing still further the size and capacity,

¹ Phœnician biremes are represented in Assyrian sculpture of the eighth century, Phœnicia at that time being subject to Assyria.

² Thucydides, I, 13.

if not the speed of the vessel. In 398 B.C., according to Diodorus, the first quadriremes and quinqueremes, ships of four and five superimposed banks of oars, respectively, were built in Sicily for the tyrant Dionysius I. of Syracuse, in preparation for war with Carthage.¹ Quadriremes were built in Piræus in 330 B.C. and quinqueremes in 325 B.C., as extant inventories of the Athenian dockyards show.² The Carthaginians probably soon followed the lead of their foe and neighbor Syracuse, for at the beginning of the First Punic War their fleets consisted wholly of vessels of five banks of oars and larger. The Romans began their first serious venture at sea with quinqueremes, which they built from the model of a stranded Punic vessel.

In the third, second, and first centuries, B.C., great-ship construction went to amazing lengths. The quinquereme continued to be the prevalent type, but no navy was considered up-to-date without vessels of a higher rating. Ships of from six to ten banks of oars were common in the Macedonian, Syrian, Egyptian, Carthaginian, Roman, and Rhodian fleets, and participated in naval battles. Demetrius Poliorcetes of Macedon undoubtedly had an eleven-banked vessel about 300 B.C., and a

¹ Diodorus, XIV, 7. Ships of more than three banks of oars may, of course, have originated with the Carthaginians or their kinsmen the Phoenicians. Aristotle, indeed, ascribes the first quadriremes to the former. See article on "Ships" by A. B. Cook, "Companion to Greek Studies", p. 584.

² Torr, "Ancient Ships", p. 5.

century later kings Philip and Perseus of Macedon possessed one of sixteen banks, which after the latter's defeat at Pydna was surrendered to Rome and brought up the Tiber.¹

In Egypt, under the Ptolemies, still vaster ships are recorded; Athenæus states that Ptolemy Philadelphus, besides galleys of thirteen banks and less, had one galley of twenty banks and two of thirty banks of oars; while Ptolemy Philopater, according to the same writer, had a ship of forty banks.² Plutarch and Pliny also state that Philadelphus and Philopater had ships of thirty and forty banks of oars.³ These statements have been partly confirmed in modern times by an inscription unearthed in Cyprus, namely, a dedication by the reigning Ptolemy at the base of the statue of one Pyrgoteles, who is described as the architect of a thirty-banked galley.⁴ If such constructions existed, however — and in spite of the evidence it is hard to believe their existence — it is certain that they were designed only as vessels of display, *tours de force* in naval architecture, and were never intended for use in warfare.

Volumes have been written about the ancient warship, its size, construction, oarage, armament, appearance, and so forth. The subject is one of

¹ Polybius, XVIII, 44; Livy, XIV, 35. Torr, *op. cit.*, pp. 6 and 7.

² Athenæus, V, 36. See Appendix A.

³ Plutarch, "Demetrius", 43; Pliny, VII, 57. Torr, *op. cit.*, pp. 8 and 9.

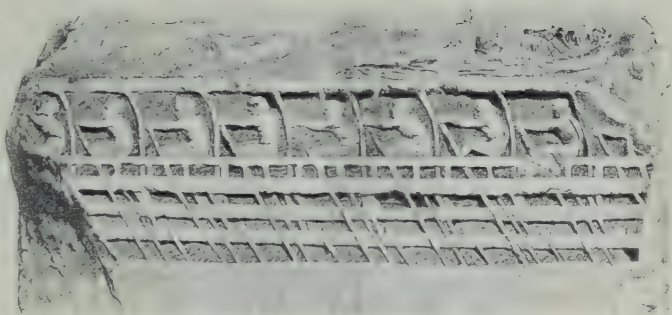
⁴ *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. IX, p. 255.

extreme technicality and obscurity, and has little appeal or interest for any except the antiquarian of naval architecture. Only the barest summary can here suitably be given.

In any description of ancient war galleys emphasis must be laid on the trireme, the archetype of the ancient fighting craft after naval warfare had become a distinct science. The trireme, when perfected, contained in itself the complete principle of superimposed banks of oars, and all later types, quadriremes, quinqueremes, and upwards, were merely expansions of that principle, or super-triremes. The trireme, moreover, was the dominant type of warship during the centuries when Greek sea power held the mastery of the eastern Mediterranean, and Greek historians, with their racial affinity for the sea, have described the three-banked ship with much more precision than the later Roman historians, neglecting naval for military affairs, have described the larger rates.

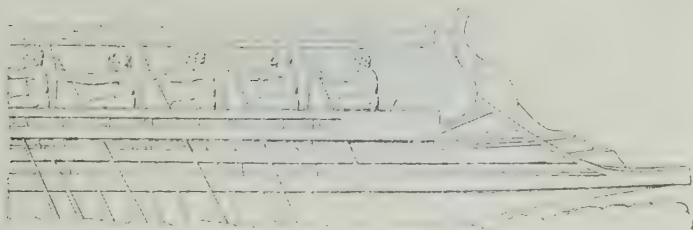
The trireme of the fifth and fourth centuries, then the standard type of warship, was a vessel of approximately 148 feet length, 18 feet beam, and probably between 4 and 6 feet draught.¹ A vessel of this size, lightly built and designed to be drawn up frequently on shore, could not have been over twenty-five tons in dead weight, carrying a crew of about two hundred men. The larger rates of warships were certainly somewhat longer and much heavier. Unfortunately, with one exception, exact figures of

¹ Torr, *op. cit.*, p. 22.



BAS-RELIEF FROM THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS

Representing the waist of an Athenian trireme, 5th Century B.C. The three tiers of oars and oar-ports and the upper, exposed tier of rowers are shown
From an Engraving



BOW OF A TRIREME

From a drawing by the Chevalier dal Pozzo, in Cartault's "La Trière Athénienne"

dimensions and tonnage exist only for merchant vessels. The great "show" war galley described by Athenæus was 420 feet long and 57 feet beam, but of less than 8 feet draught.¹ A wheat-carrying vessel of the second century A.D. is described by Lucian as 180 feet in length, 46 feet in breadth, and $43\frac{1}{2}$ feet from her upper deck to her keel.² Many merchant ships had a carrying capacity of over ten thousand talents or two hundred and fifty tons, and consequently a dead weight of approximately one hundred and fifty tons. Elephants were constantly carried in ships back and forth across the Mediterranean, and the Vatican obelisk weighing nearly five hundred tons was brought from Egypt to Rome, along with eight hundred tons of lentils, in a single ship.³ It is probable that the higher rates of warships designed for actual service, though intended to carry only crews, equipment, and a small stock of water and provisions, often exceeded two hundred feet in length and a hundred tons weight, or more than the size of the average English warship of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

The earliest triremes, like the penteconters, were almost wholly undecked ships; even the Athenian triremes which fought at Salamis, according to Thucydides, "were not completely decked."⁴ From

¹ Athenæus, V, 37. See Appendix A.

² Torr, *op. cit.*, p. 24, ref. to Lucian, *navigium*, i.

³ Torr, *op. cit.*, p. 26, ref. to Pliny, XVI, 76.

⁴ Thucydides, I, 14.

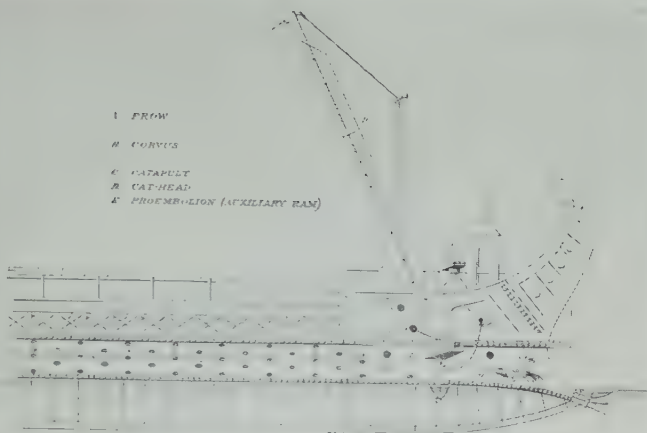
this statement it is not unreasonable to infer that the triremes of Thucydides' time — the Peloponnesian War — were wholly decked over. Polybius and Livy, describing sea warfare two centuries later, speak constantly of decked and undecked vessels, and the former are evidently galleys of three banks of oars and upwards.

The ram, or chief offensive weapon of the ancient warship, consisted of a stout, thick timber projecting several feet beyond the prow; it was pointed at the end and sheathed with bronze or iron. An integral part of the vessel, it was the most important construction on the war galley, the whole forward part being arranged with a view to giving it strength and solidity at the moment of contact with the enemy. Placed at first on Greek war vessels considerably above the water line, the ram was later fixed at or beneath the surface and its action thereby rendered the deadlier.¹

The Athenian trireme was equipped with one hundred and seventy oars, sixty-two being in the upper bank and fifty-four in each of the two lower.² Each oar, which was comparatively light and

¹ Above the main ram were generally one or more shorter or auxiliary rams intended to extend the gap made in the enemy ship, and to prevent the ramming vessel from entering too far into the flank of her wounded foe. To keep the galley from going to pieces under the violent shock of ramming and the constant straining of so many oars, the hull was strengthened by a set of cables girdling the vessel externally from stem to stern.

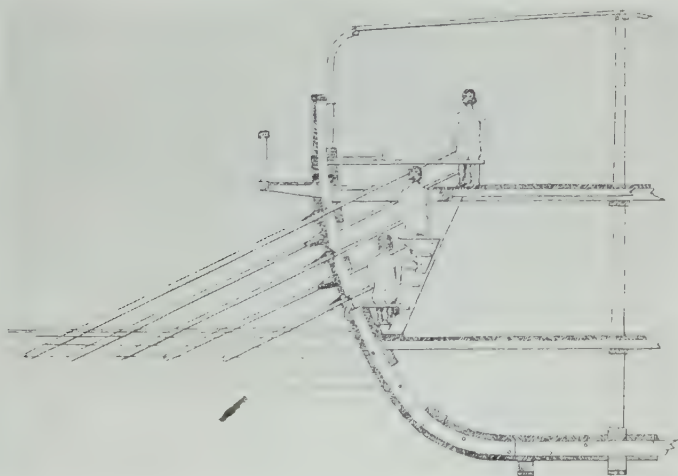
² Thirty additional oars could also be operated from the upper deck, above the three banks, but were generally not used.



PROW OF A ROMAN QUINQUEREME

Showing the corvus and arrangement of oar-ports. Scale, 23.46 feet to an inch

From an Engraving



TRANSVERSAL CUT SHOWING ARRANGEMENT OF OARS AND ROWERS ON A ROMAN QUINQUEREME

Scale 8.10 feet to an inch

From an Engraving

short, was manned by a single rower,¹ who sat athwart a beam or bench, whose hardness was softened by a rower's cushion. There were probably two hundred and thirty-six oars and rowers in the quadrireme, while the Roman and Carthaginian quinqueremes in the Punic wars had approximately three hundred, and later such ships were reckoned at four hundred rowers. Many of the higher rates had from five hundred to one thousand rowers, and the almost fabulous forty-banked ship of Ptolemy Philopater is said to have had four thousand.²

Of the arrangement of oars and rowers' benches on the ancient warship little definite is known. Modern shipwrights have sought unsuccessfully to reconstruct a trireme, and much learning and ingenuity have been expended, if not wasted, on the problem. It can only be said that the oar ports ran in tiers, one above another, along the sides of the vessel; and as these tiers were often only two feet or less apart vertically, the rowers' benches, to allow sitting space for the rowers, must have ascended upwards like great steps from the center line of the ship to the gunwales. The oars in each superior bank must have been slightly longer than those in the bank below, and some ingenious system of control must

¹ "A crew of a trireme could make a forced march when each man was carrying his oar and its appurtenances." — Torr, "Ancient Ships", p. 1., ref. to Thucydides, II, 93.

² Athenæus, V, 37; Plutarch, "Demetrius", 43. Torr, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
See Appendix A.

have been used to prevent interference between the oars of the different banks.¹ It is known that the numerous oar ports were closed by *askomata* or thick leathern bags, which clung close around the oars without much hindrance to their action and kept the water from entering the vessel.

Of the speed of ancient warships fairly good evidence exists. According to Xenophon, it was a long day's voyage for a trireme using oars and sails from Byzantium to Heraclea in Bithynia, a distance of one hundred and twenty sea miles.² The same author also states that a Milesian privateersman carrying the tidings of the victory of Ægospotami in 405 B.C. from the Hellespont to Sparta (about three hundred and forty sea miles) reached his destination on the third day.³ From Thucydides we know that a trireme going at forced speed made the passage from Athens to Mytilene (about one hundred and eighty-six sea miles) in approximately twenty-four hours.⁴ The above reliable instances make it clear that a warship could maintain an average speed of at least seven knots on a voyage of considerable length, given favorable weather conditions. For a short period of time, on tolerably smooth

¹ The upper bank of oars, whose rowers would be most exposed to the fire of the enemy's missiles, was often covered by a screen running along the galley's sides from stem to stern. Such vessels were known as *catafract* or protected; those not so provided as *afract*, or unprotected.

² Xenophon, "Anabasis," VI, 4.

³ Xenophon, "Hellenica," II, 11.

⁴ Thucydides, III, 36.

water, it is likely that the trireme or the quinquereme could make from thirteen to fifteen knots. There is good reason to believe, indeed, that the potential speed of the ancient fighting-ship exceeded anything known in naval warfare up to the days of steam.

The Greek or the Roman war galley, to sum up, was a vessel of light construction, long and narrow, with fine sharp lines calculated to cut the water like a knife. She was designed to be beached wholly or in part almost every day and was capable, if need be, of being transported considerable distances overland on rollers. At least one instance is noted in ancient history of a fleet making its escape from the enemy in this way.¹ Like the modern steam warship — and superior to last century's sailing man-of-war in this respect — the ancient warship possessed, under favorable weather conditions, high speed and great mobility of action. She could go where she willed, given tolerable weather, independent of wind or lack of wind. She could row circles around the sailing merchantship, she could hold position accurately in fleets, she could spin about almost on her own axis. The fine shape of her stern enabled her to make almost the same speed reversing as advancing. Sometimes in naval battles a whole squadron would back water, keeping an unbroken front to the enemy.²

¹ Thucydides, III, 81; Livy, XXV, 11.

² Cartault, "La Triere Athenienne", p. 242.

Here, however, the resemblance between galley and steamer ends, and in other respects the sailing warship of a century ago approached more nearly the effectiveness of the modern steam warship than did the ancient war galley.

Even the mobility of the oar-driven vessel, it should be remarked, reliable as that was in fair weather, was subject to the rapid deterioration of human muscle and energy after comparatively short periods of exertion. The galley, moreover, was so far from seaworthy that she had to run for shelter even before a moderate storm; and more warships were probably destroyed by storm in ancient history than in battle. Naval operations, in consequence, were confined for the most part to the spring and summer months; even then fleets seldom ventured far out of sight of shore, as the mariner's compass was unknown and only the crudest sort of dead reckoning was practiced. War galleys likewise habitually beached at night, the crews sleeping on shore; all the meals, so far as practicable, were taken on the land. The cargo space on ancient warships was so limited that provisions and especially water could be carried on board sufficient only for two or three days, and constant supplies had to be drawn from the land, unless the fleet was accompanied by supply ships. As a brilliant modern writer points out, water supply played the same part for the fleets of antiquity that coal supply plays to-day: "it bound down their movements to certain points on

the mainland.”¹ Ancient historians continually emphasize the disadvantage of a fleet operating along a hostile coast and the advantage of having a friendly shore and strong bodies of infantry to fall back on. This dependence of war galleys on the land is important, for, as will be seen, its influence on sea strategy in general and blockading operations in particular was controlling.

From the rather meager data extant, an accurate picture of the ancient warship, as it impressed itself on the minds of the Greeks and the Romans, is scarcely realizable either by words or by the brush of the painter. It may be asserted with confidence, however, that though lacking the infinite grace of the sailing frigate of last century or the Olympian majesty of the modern warship, the war galley of antiquity was a thing of beauty and instinct with life. Homer, indeed, likened the penteconter to an ocean giant or deity, and later poets commonly compared a warship under way, rhythmically dipping and raising her vast mass of oars, to a bird upon its flight.²

It is not as a unit, however, but as one of hundreds of similar units working together that the ancient warship should be envisaged. Of the vast numbers of classical fleets there can be no question. Polybius, one of the most reliable and critical of ancient

¹ Ferrero, "Greatness and Decline of Rome", II, p. 240. See Appendices B and I.

² Torr, "Ancient Ships", p. 20.

historians and curious about naval matters, states that three hundred and thirty Roman warships faced three hundred and fifty Carthaginian vessels in the battle of Ecnomus.¹ According to Appian, the fleet of Agrippa at Naulochus numbered three hundred galleys. It is probable that between two hundred and fifty and three hundred vessels took part on either side at Actium. The fleets of Athens during the period of her supremacy commonly numbered two hundred galleys or greater. The Greek forces at Salamis were three hundred and eighty-five galleys, and though the astounding figures of Herodotus for the fleet of Xerxes are often questioned, it is certainly not impossible that the master of the shipping and the sea peoples of the Levant from the Hellespont to the Nile, controlling the wealth of Asia, could indeed have mustered twelve hundred triremes and other thousands of smaller craft.

SECTION II. PERSONNEL, SEA TRAINING, NAVAL ADMINISTRATION, AND MAINTENANCE

The personnel of ancient as of modern navies was sharply divided into two classes: officers and crews. The distinction between them was probably as marked in that day as now; severe and cruel punishments were inflicted for insubordination, and though frequent mention is made by ancient writers of mutinies in armies, I have failed to find record of

¹ Polybius, I, 26.

any such on a fleet or a warship. Ancient naval discipline, we may be sure, was excellent.¹

Little distinction, as a rule, existed between the highest rank of military and naval officers, the commanders in chief, whether of the land or of the sea forces. The Athenian generals (*strategoi*), for example, ruled interchangeably over armies or fleets, and although men with special sea experience were often or usually selected for the naval service, the separate rank of admiral was never created by the Athenian State.² Even the Athenian Phormio, a genuinely professional naval officer and the father of naval tactics, held high command on land as well as on the sea. The same state of affairs existed in the Roman naval service during the earlier sea history of the Republic. The consuls in the First Punic War commanded either the fleet or the army, as the casting of the lots decided. Because of the Romans' racial dislike of the sea, officers with the inferior rank of *praetor* or *praefectus classis* and having special qualifications for the naval service were, in the later history of the Republic and under the Empire, often given command of fleets; yet even then such great generals as Pompey, Lucullus, and

¹ For the severity of ancient naval discipline, see Xenophon's "Anabasis", V, 8, 20.

² In the narrative portions of this work, however, for the sake of clarity, I have used the term admiral as a translation of the Athenian *strategos*, since the Greek term includes commanders both on the land and on the sea, and when the *strategos* was actually a naval commander the most intelligible English version of the word is "admiral."

Julius Caesar achieved distinction as naval commanders. Hannibal excelled in both land and sea commands.

A Greek or Roman "general" usually commanded an entire fleet, or at least some large division or squadron of the fleet. Directly under him were the captains of ships, the "naucleroi" or, in the Athenian navy, the "trierarchs", that is, "commanders of triremes." These, as a rule though by no means invariably, were men of greater sea training and experience than the "generals." The trierarchs in the Athenian State formed a separate order or class known as the trierarchy, consisting of the wealthiest individuals in the commonwealth above a certain grade, on each of whom fell the duty and honor of equipping a trireme and commanding it in his country's service. The trierarch was responsible to the State for the safety and well-being of his ship, and, like the modern captain, exercised absolute sway over the ship's company. He took orders only from the commander of the fleet or squadron.

Beneath the trierarch, or captain of the trireme, in authority were four commissioned officers: (1) The pilot, or sailing master, who was the chief executive officer of the ship and had practical charge of its management; (2) the mate or officer in charge at the bow (*proreus*); (3) the purser or supply officer (*pentecontarque*); and (4) the boatswain (*keleustes*), who commanded the oarsmen and regulated their movements in rowing. As the ancient

warship was preëminently a galley, the position of the boatswain was particularly important. He it was who signalled the oarsmen to start or stop rowing, to slow up or quicken pace, and by his cries excited their efforts and gave unison to their action. Beside the boatswain at his station stood a flute player, who, by simple and strongly rhythmic music, helped to sustain the rowers in their long and arduous labor together.

Such was the commissioned personnel of the Athenian trireme. Of the officers of the quinquereme and higher rates we have no evidence, but it is probable that they corresponded closely to those of the smaller galley.

The crews of ancient warships, including the non-commissioned or petty officers, were divided into three groups: (1) rowers, (2) sailors, and (3) marines.

Much the most numerous of the three, the rowers varied in number from one hundred and seventy on the Athenian trireme to over five hundred on the largest rates. They obeyed the orders of the boatswain, who was assisted by two noncommissioned officers, one on either side of the vessel. The function of the rowers, as a rule, was solely to row, although, being composed in part of citizens or free mercenaries, they could be and sometimes were supplied with arms and used as a landing force.

The sailors — numbering about seventeen on the trireme and proportionally on the higher rates — were under the immediate supervision of two noncom-

missioned quartermasters. Their work — which was probably far less toilsome than that of the rowers — consisted in looking after the rigging and sails and in steering and navigating the vessel.

The marines were simply heavy-armed land troops (*hoplites*) detailed for duty on shipboard. They were used for boarding the enemy's ships, for repelling boarders, or for forming a mobile landing force to operate in the enemy's territory. Their numbers varied in accordance with the character and object of the expedition on which they were embarked. Generally speaking, in proportion as the expedition was strictly naval in character, the smaller was the number of marines taken on board. Thus, at Salamis, when the system of land warfare at sea still largely prevailed, the number of marines attached to each warship was eighteen, of whom four were archers and the rest heavy-armed; while in the days of Phormio, half a century later, when naval tactics had reached a high stage of development, the total number had been reduced to ten, which was barely sufficient to repel boarders during the few seconds in which the warship was in contact with its rammed foe. When the object of the expedition was military as well as naval, a much larger number of marines, often as high as fifty to a vessel, was embarked on the Greek warship. The Romans, with their much larger vessels and their incurable instinct for land warfare at sea, went a great deal further. Their quinqueremes carried as high as

one hundred and twenty marines to each ship, and to their valor — we are told by the most competent of witnesses — Rome's good fortune at sea was due. "For although nautical science," says Polybius, "contributes largely to success in sea-fights, *still it is the courage of the marines that turns the tide most decisively in favor of victory.*"¹

The normal crew of the trireme, as we have seen, consisted of one hundred and seventy rowers, seventeen sailors and ten marines. These numbers included the petty officers but were exclusive of the trierarch and the four subaltern commissioned officers, who brought the ship's company up to a total of two hundred and two. The Roman quinquereme, Polybius tells us, was manned by three hundred rowers and one hundred and twenty marines, but whether these included the sailors, and how many were the commissioned officers, we have no means of knowing.

Not less important than the numbers and the functions of the ancient personnels are the sources from which they were drawn and the method of their recruitment. The aristocratic and plutocratic classes almost exclusively supplied the higher naval officers, including the captains, of the Athenian fleet. This was much less true in the Roman State, where dislike of the sea, particularly among the upper classes, forced the government to have recourse to baser or to foreign elements for its sea command.

¹ Polybius, VI, 52. See Appendix D.

Among the officers of the fleets of the later Roman Republic and of the Empire, it is known, were many Greeks.

The crews, it is certain, both among the Romans and the Greeks, were drawn usually from the lowest elements of the population — whether citizens, or mercenaries, or slaves. The latter probably predominated in the fleets of Rome, where sea service was unpopular and where slaves and wealth were abundant; while citizens were the most numerous in the Athenian navy, at least in the days of its prime. Every adult Athenian male, indeed, of whatever rank or fortune, was liable to service in the fleet; a good instance of this conscription is cited by Xenophon in his *Hellenica*. “Now that the position of affairs,” says he, “including the blockade of Mytilene, was fully known at Athens, a vote was passed to send out a reënforcement of 110 ships. Every man of ripe age, whether slave or free, was impressed for this service, so that within thirty days the whole 110 vessels were fully manned and weighed anchor. *Amongst those who served in this fleet were also many of the knights.*”¹

In usual practice, however, the poorest class of citizens, along with mercenaries and slaves, made up the complements of oarsmen and sailors: the pursuits of commerce and fisheries, we may be sure, contributed large quotas, and the riffraff of seaport towns undoubtedly were often driven in large num-

¹ Xenophon, “*Hellenica*”, I, 6.

bers by poverty to a calling that furnished a sufficient, if a laborious livelihood.

The regular employment and payment of citizens for service in the Athenian navy began at least as far back as Salamis; and as larger and larger numbers of citizens took service in the fleet their pay and political consideration rose accordingly. Pericles, to strengthen his hold on the Democratic party, of which the sailor population of Piræus formed the backbone, "sent out every year threescore galleys, on board of which there went numbers of the citizens, *who were in pay eight months*, learning and practicing the art of seamanship."¹ In the days of Athenian sea supremacy, the rower or the sailor of the fleet received the liberal pay of a drachma a day,² in addition to rations of barley, wine, and oil. This rate of remuneration was afterwards cut in two, partly because of the decline of Athenian finances, partly, it was alleged, because it was found by experience that such ample pay made the seaman dissolute and spoiled him for effective service.³

It may be stated that the reputation of the ancient sailor was far more notorious and unsavory than that of his descendant to-day or even of a hundred years ago. Pollux includes the seaman in the list

¹ Plutarch, "Pericles", XI.

² For the pay and rations of ancient seamen, see Thucydides, III, 17 and 49, also VIII, 100; Xenophon, "Hellenica", I, 5.

³ An Athenian drachma of ancient times was the equivalent in metallic weight of about twenty cents in silver to-day. Its purchasing power, however, was probably from ten to fifteen times greater than now.

of those following "infamous callings":¹ and the comedies of Aristophanes, overflowing with coarse and obscene humor, are a living image of the minds of the maritime audiences for whom they were written and before whom they were enacted. It is not unlikely that the ancient seafarer and fighter, though less daring and hardy than his descendant to-day, was much the same reckless, jovial, care-free individual as the traditional tar of modern times.

The training of the ancients for naval warfare consisted largely in constant rowing practice, in maneuvers of fleets at sea, and in mock naval combats.² Peoples like the Phœnicians, the Carthaginians, the Corinthians, the Athenians, whose living was derived mainly from the sea, were at a great advantage over others in the attainment of naval efficiency. The Athenians — whose experience alone in this matter we actually know — were trained to the sea and lessoned in naval warfare from their childhood up. They were early practiced in launching ships in the sea and in drawing them up on shore. Their youth had numerous boat races and mock naval combats, in celebration of the anniversary of Salamis and other patriotic and religious festivals. This early training in seamanship was never wholly lost. The manning of their navy, the administration of their overseas possessions, and the prosecu-

¹ Cartault, "La Triere Athénienne", p. 235; ref. to Pollux, V, 128.

² Herodotus, VI, 12; Livy, XXIV, 51.

tion of their immense foreign trade, involving "continual voyaging and training and practicing", forced virtually the whole population to become seamen sooner or later.¹

Even among the natural sea peoples considerable time and preparation were necessary for the highest efficiency in naval warfare. The Corinthians took two years to equip ships and train crews before sailing in the great expedition to crush their refractory colony, Corcyra.² Only by nearly continuous training, year in and year out, were the Athenians able to arrive at the height of efficiency and the perfection of morale which is seen in the naval command of Phormio. "He" (Phormio), says Thucydides, "had always been in the habit of telling them and training their minds to believe that no superiority of hostile forces could justify them in retreating. And it had been a received opinion among the sailors

¹ Thucydides, I, 31. See Appendix G.

² "A man who is perpetually voyaging is forced to handle the oar, he and his domestic alike, and to learn the terms familiar in seamanship. Hence a stock of skilful mariners is produced, bred upon a wide experience of voyaging and practice. They (the Athenians) have learnt their business, some in piloting a small craft, others a merchant vessel, whilst others have been drafted off from these for service on a ship-of-war. So that the majority of them are able to row the moment they set foot on board a vessel, having been in a state of preliminary practice all their lives." Pseudo-Xenophon, "Polity of the Athenians", chap. 1.

"The majority of you (the Athenians) derive your livelihood from the sea, or the things connected with it; so that in the very act of minding your own affairs you are training yourselves to enter the lists of naval combat." Xenophon, "Hellenica", VII, 1. See Appendix H.

that, as Athenians, they were bound to face any number of Peloponnesian ships.”¹

Few details of ancient naval administration are extant and such as exist relate mostly to the Athenian navy. The governing naval board of Athens was the Senate, or Council of Five Hundred. That body, says Aristotle, “has the supervision of triremes and naval stores and dockyards; and builds new ships, either triremes or quadriremes, as the commons may vote, and provides new stores and dockyards. The choice of naval architects is a business of the commons and made by open voting. If the Senate fails to deliver the ships duly finished to their successors they forfeit the donation of a golden crown, which is not received till their successors are in office. They provide for the construction of new triremes by appointing ten ship-builders from the general body of Athenians.”² When an expedition was fitting out for sea, the Senate held its sittings at the Choma, a quay near the mouth of the triple harbor of Piræus. Each trierarch, as the equipment of his trireme was completed, was compelled by law to lay the vessel alongside the quay to be inspected by the Senate. The inspection over, the fleet weighed anchor and proceeded on its voyage.

The early Roman Republican navy was supervised by two administrative officers known as *duoviri navales*, probably elected by the people. At the outbreak of the struggle with Carthage, however, such

¹ Thucydides, II, 88.

² Aristotle, “Athenian Constitution”, p. 46.

offices were virtually extinct, and the fleets of the Punic and later wars were administered by four *quaestores classici*, who were responsible to the Senate.

Among the Athenians and, to a lesser extent, among the Romans, the burden of naval expense was borne partly by the State and partly by the wealthier classes. The classical peoples were taught that wealth had its duties and responsibilities as well as its rights and pleasures, and that as the rich had the most to gain or to lose by war its cost should fall largely upon them. This belief was expressed most clearly by the Athenian Democracy in its institution of the trierarchy, already referred to. While the State furnished the necessary docks, ship sheds, and arsenals, provided the hulls of triremes and also part of the rigging, those citizens whose wealth exceeded a certain measure were each compelled to defray the expense and see to the work of fitting out a trireme, as well as of training the oarsmen and commanding the ship in service. Each one on whom this duty and honor rested was known as a trierarch and the whole body as the trierarchy. This institution, which was the object of Demosthenes' extreme socialistic measures, underwent various modifications at the hands of reformers and demagogues and remained to the end a burning issue in Athenian life and politics. By a peculiar provision of the law, if any member of the trierarchy pleaded inability of bearing the expense, he was ex-

cused, provided he could prove another citizen richer than himself: if the latter refused he was obliged to change his estate with the other; and this sort of action was called permutation, or exchange of fortunes. By this means the orator Isocrates was compelled to bear his share in the burden of the trierarchy.¹

SECTION III. TACTICS, OFFENSIVE WEAPONS, AND STRATEGY

Two distinct systems of naval warfare, broadly speaking, existed in ancient history: (1) the system which may be defined as land warfare projected on the sea by means of ships; (2) the system which depended for success on adroit handling of ships, on tactics, and maneuvers, and which partook somewhat of the character of sea warfare as the term is understood to-day.

The first-named system was undoubtedly the earlier, being described by Greek and Roman writers as "the ancient system" of naval warfare, and was never wholly discarded by the classical nations. It consisted mainly in hand-to-hand combats between crews of ships grappled close together. Thucydides, describing the battle of Sybota between the Corinthians and the Corcyreans (432 B.C.), graphically pictures this older system of naval fighting:

¹ For instances in Roman history of forced levies on the wealthier classes for equipping fleets, see Livy, XIV, 11 and XVI, 35 and 36.

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"The decks of both fleets," he says, "were crowded with heavy infantry, with archers and javelin men; for their naval arrangements were still of the old clumsy sort. The engagement . . . had almost the appearance of a battle by land. When two ships once charged one another it was hardly possible to part company, for the throng of vessels was dense, and the hopes of victory lay chiefly in the heavy-armed, who maintained a steady fight upon the decks, the ships meanwhile remaining motionless. There were no attempts to break the enemy's line. Brute force and rage made up for the want of tactics. Everywhere the battle was a scene of tumult and confusion." ¹

With the adoption of the ram as the weapon *par excellence* of naval warfare, there gradually grew up a system of ship tactics depending largely on speed and dexterity, the object of which was to sink the opposing vessel by running the ram into a vulnerable part of her hull, preferably amidships. "The ram," as a modern British admiral observes, "is a weapon peculiar to the sea: its effectiveness depends upon facility in manoeuvring, which, in turn, hinges upon speed. The higher the speed the greater is the facility in manoeuvring and the probability of ramming successfully or avoiding being rammed." ² Consequently, with the perfection of the use of the ram, the weapons and methods of land warfare were

¹ Thucydides, I, 48-55. See Appendix D.

² Custance, "War at Sea", p. 9.

largely discarded from the warship. The galley was lightened and her speed increased by decreasing her complement of heavy-armed soldiers or marines on board. Instead of being used as a transport for conveying crowds of warriors alongside of hostile vessels similarly manned, where they fought it out soldier-wise, the warship herself now became "a missile to be launched with sudden violence against the vulnerable parts of the enemy's vessel and again suddenly withdrawn by means of dexterous rowing."¹ One strong, well-placed blow of the ram was generally sufficient to send the rammed vessel to the bottom.

Though the maneuvers employed in the warfare of ramming were many and varied, the object sought was generally effected in one of two ways: (1) the attacking vessel by superior speed or maneuvering brought her ram crashing into the enemy's flank without any preliminary blow or contact; (2) by a swift rush alongside, the assailant, suddenly drawing in her own oars on one side, swept away the enemy's oars with her sharp bow, sheered off, and then returning as her foe lay paralyzed and helpless, delivered the *coup de grace*.²

In rapid and expert maneuvering, in dexterous charges and feigned retreats, the Athenians attained preëminence in the eastern Mediterranean in the fifth century, and the Carthaginians in the central Mediterranean in the third century, B.C. Where

¹ "Companion to Greek Studies", p. 587.

² See Appendix E.

such tactics could be executed to the best advantage — that is, in combats in the open water — these people were all but irresistible in their chosen method of sea warfare. It was only by reverting for defensive purposes to the old system of land warfare afloat that the enemies of Athens and Carthage were able to challenge and combat their superiority. The Peloponnesians and their allies in the middle period (415–412 B.C.) of the great sea struggle between Athens and Sparta, confined themselves largely to defensive operations, staying within their harbors, or operating close along shore or in narrow reaches of the sea, where they could fall back quickly on the support of their land forces. In this way they endeavored either to avoid combat altogether, or, if the enemy were resolved on fighting, to force him to charge bow against bow, in which mode of attack his ram would do little or no damage, and the result would depend largely on the valor of the fighting men on the ships.

With this sort of warfare in view the Corinthians and the Syracusans cut down the bows of their galleys and so greatly strengthened and thickened the projecting timbers that the light prows of the Athenian galleys, built for swift maneuvering in the open, were completely shattered in the onset. The result was the disastrous defeat of the Athenian fleet in the Great Harbor of Syracuse, causing ultimately the ruin of Athenian sea power.¹

¹ See Appendices C and D.

The Romans, in their desire to neutralize the deadliness of the ram and convert sea warfare into something like a combat on land, hit on an extremely ingenious device. Realizing their deficiencies as seamen and tacticians, as compared with the Carthaginians, they invented the famous "crow" (*corvus*), or boarding bridge, whereby their invincible legionaries could cross to the decks of the enemy's vessel and overpower it. The "crow", as will be seen, was used with signal effect in the First Punic War and was probably a decisive factor in the establishment of Rome's mastery at sea.

The Greeks and the Romans alike, however, were forced to realize that this method of land warfare afloat, though often excellent for defensive purposes, was utterly inadequate for offensive sea warfare. For that, a mobile "fleet-in-being" holding command of the open seas was essential. Accordingly, the Peloponnesians in the last seven years of the great Peloponnesian War persistently and successfully developed a strong high-seas fleet, contesting with Athens the supremacy of the Ægean; while the Romans in the First Punic War gradually improved their sea craft, finally discarding the "crows" altogether and winning the final battle of the Ægates Isles by sheer superiority in seamanship and tactics.

The fleet tactics of the ancients, when such were consciously employed, bear an amazing resemblance to those of the sailing fleets of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of our era. The basic idea of

the English tacticians of those centuries — of maneuvering so as to bring the whole or greater part of the attacking fleet to bear on an inferior isolated portion of the enemy's fleet — is clearly seen in the naval battles of the third and second centuries, B.C., when classical naval science probably reached its highest point of development. The prime object of the commander in ancient as in modern naval warfare, whether offensive or defensive, was to keep his line unbroken and his fleet acting as a unit. The two great fleet tactics of the Greeks and of the Romans were the *diekplous* or "breaking through the line" and the *periplous* or "outflanking." The idea of both was to break up the enemy's fleet and beat the isolated fragments in detail. As distinguished from these conscious offensive maneuvers a chance collision or unconcerted attack was termed the *prosbolé*.¹

Though the ram remained throughout ancient history the chief offensive weapon of naval warfare, other weapons were introduced in the second and first centuries, B.C., which had a strong modifying influence on naval tactics, and which gave to the sea-fight something of the character of a modern naval combat.

As early as the Peloponnesian wars ships had been used as a means of assaulting harbor and coastal fortifications, — towers and battering rams being erected on the decks, whereby troops could effect a

¹ See Appendix E.

lodgment on the hostile walls or make a breach.¹ To repel such assaults ballistæ, catapults, and other kinds of ancient artillery were placed on the walls or other vantage points on the land.² Ships, in turn, were equipped with such engines, first for operations against fortifications and then for combats with other ships at sea. In the naval battles of the last two centuries of the Pagan Era, and particularly in the battles immediately preceding the establishment of the Roman Empire, these missile-hurling engines were used frequently and with great effect; and had not the *pax Romana* of the Empire virtually put an end to ancient naval warfare, progress in the invention of naval artillery would probably have gone a long way.

Ancient naval artillery comprised a variety of missile-throwing engines, all of which were similar in the respect of the comparative shortness of their range. Ballistæ and catapults hurling large stones were probably the most generally employed. The Rhodians, however, devised means of letting fall paniers of burning coals on the decks of the enemy's ships, which speedily consumed them.³ The great Hannibal, who in the days of his exile showed himself as resourceful a commander on the sea as he had been on land, won a victory over a superior fleet by the singular device of hurling potfuls of poisonous serpents into the enemy's galleys. When the crews

¹ Thucydides, III, 5; IV, 13. ² Polybius, I, 53. See Appendix K.

³ Polybius, Vol. II, XXI, 7; Appian, XI, 24; Livy, XXXVII, 11.

saw their ships filled with wriggling snakes and adders such confusion set in that the commanders were forced to turn about and flee to the shore and the protection of friendly land forces.¹ In the battles of Naulochus and Actium a device was employed for throwing a grappling iron or harpoon at the end of a cable to the enemy's vessel; when the implement was caught fast the hostile galley was then hauled alongside by means of a windlass and overpowered by boarders.²

While naval *tactics* vary from age to age and are often revolutionized by changes in ship construction and weapons, the basic principles of naval *strategy* have remained the same in all ages. As Mahan points out, "The movements which precede and prepare for great battles, or which, by their skilful and energetic combinations, attain great ends without the actual compact of arms, depend on factors more permanent than the weapons of the age and therefore furnish principles of more enduring value."³ These principles are based on human reason and self-interest. The main object of naval strategy, for example, whether in ancient or in modern times, is the destruction of the enemy's "fleet-in-being" — that accomplished, all else follows; subsidiary objects are the destruction of his commerce, the blockade of his coasts, the cutting off of his food supplies and, generally speaking, the wearing-down of his

¹ Nepos, "Hannibal", X and XI.

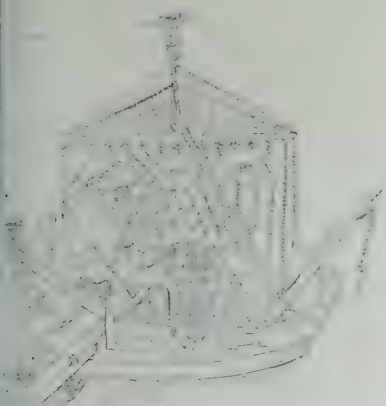
² Appian, V, 118-119.

³ Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power on History", p. 506.

military, economic, and moral forces until resistance ceases.

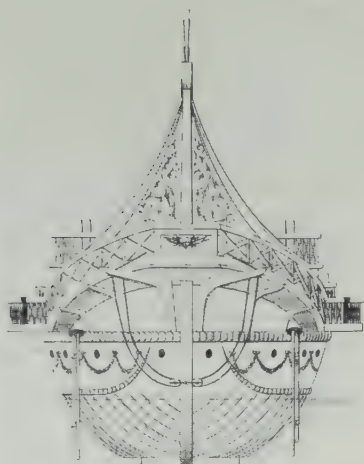
Though the great principles of naval strategy are unchangeable, conditions of naval warfare varying from age to age exert a strong modifying influence upon their application. Thus the substitution of steam power for sail power in the nineteenth century had the effect of making naval strategy a far more exact and certain science, a far more pervasive and world-embracing force, than ever before; while the more recent inventions of long-ranged artillery, the torpedo, the submarine, the wireless, and many another have been incalculable in their perfecting influence on naval strategy.

The peculiar conditions of ancient naval warfare have been briefly explained already and need only be referred to in order to show their effect on strategic principles. The most obvious and controlling of these conditions was the dependence of ancient fleets on the land as a result of the unseaworthiness of the ancient war galley and the crude state of ancient navigation. Naval strategy, in consequence, was a game that was largely played along the coasts, instead of having the vast ocean for its field, with infinite possibilities for surprise and all sorts of mystery, as in modern times. When a fleet in ancient times sought its adversary, it was never compelled to search for him in the trackless wastes of world-girdling oceans but along some coast or in some archipelago of the Mediterranean. Naval opera-



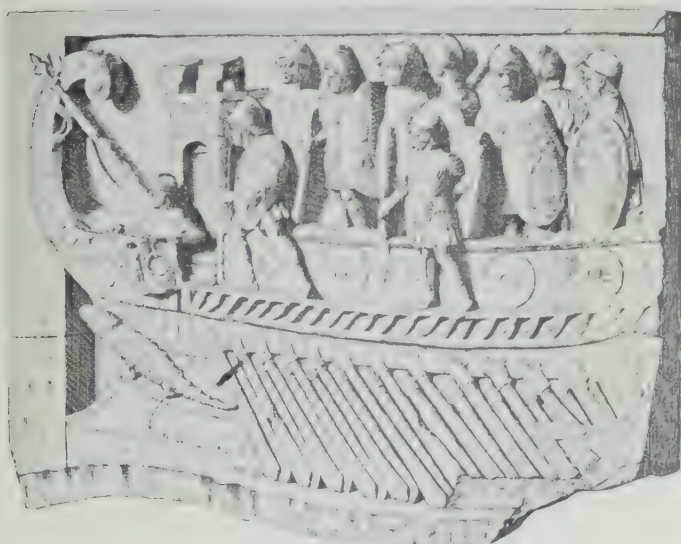
MERCHANT-SHIP ABOUT THE END
OF 2D CENTURY A.D.

From an Engraving



STERN OF A ROMAN
QUINQUEREME

From an Engraving



PROW OF A ROMAN WARSHIP (BIREME), ABOUT 50 A.D.

From an Engraving

tions were always closely dependent on the land.¹ A fleet might indeed avoid its adversary along some coast by dodging out to sea, but its departure from the coast was always limited both as to distance and to time, and soon it must return to the support and the shelter of the land. Only in a sea like the Ægean dotted everywhere with islands, large and small, was anything like the modern naval game of hide-and-seek possible. Thus it was far easier in ancient times for a fleet acting on the offensive to seek and locate its enemy, and far harder for a fleet on the defensive to avoid contact with the enemy.

This same dependence of war fleets on the land, their unseaworthiness and small radius of action, likewise had a restricting effect on such subsidiary objects of naval strategy as commerce destroying and warfare of attrition. While the movements of fleets of commerce, as of fleets of war, in ancient times were largely along coasts or among islands, yet the sailing merchantman was so much more stable and seaworthy than the war galley that it could often avoid its foe by shaping its course over the open sea or by facing weather conditions which would have meant death to the war galley.² Maritime commerce, therefore, was certainly far less at the mercy of the warship in the ancient world than to-day.

Blockading, for similar reasons, was also a far more difficult and uncertain operation in ancient sea warfare than now. It was impossible for the classical

¹ See Appendix I.

² See Appendix L.

war galleys to keep the sea in front of blockaded ports for days and weeks and months at a stretch, as was done by the "seventy-fours" of last century, not to mention the war vessels of to-day. Seldom, if ever, did ancient warships do patrol or blockading duty at night; the ships were beached and the crews slept on shore. Some secure permanent station close to the blockaded harbor was necessary if the blockade were to be long continued and effective. If the national or allied land forces of the blockading fleet possessed the shore in the vicinity of the harbor, or if some near off-lying island afforded a secure station, the task of the blockaders was immensely simplified; but if no such island were at hand or if the coast were held by powerful enemy land forces, the difficulties of blockading were tremendous, well-nigh insuperable. Some station on the coast must be seized, fortified, and held against the enemy's assault; supplies must be brought up and water obtained along a coast in the enemy's possession; a close watch must be kept for blockade runners or for the approach of a hostile war fleet — these and other problems of blockading often taxed the strength, endurance, and capacity of ancient officers and men to the breaking point.¹

¹ An example of this is seen in the death of Bibulus, Pompey's lieutenant (48 B.C.), who, Dio tells us, died "worn out by hard work" as a result of successfully blockading Mark Antony in Brundisium and preventing him from crossing with his forces to the aid of his chief, Julius Cæsar, on the opposite side of the Adriatic. — Dio, XLI, 48. See Appendices B and F.

As a rule ancient blockades were unsuccessful or of dubious effectiveness. Often they were broken by swift, daring blockade runners during the night or even during the day; in stormy weather, particularly, sailing merchantmen or transports were able to enter blockaded harbors when the less seaworthy war galleys dared not put out to meet them. Yet despite its difficulties and frequent ill success, blockading was an operation which ancient seamen constantly resorted to and sometimes used with decisive results.¹

To what extent, it may be asked, were ancient sea power and sea control effective? The question cannot be answered in a sentence or in a paragraph; it will be the object of the narrative portion and the conclusion of this work to show accurately and to what extent such power and control operated. It may be said in anticipation, however, that in two

¹ Keeping ships in good repair and seaworthiness was also an important and difficult factor during a long blockade. The following passage from Thucydides illustrates the difficulties of the ancients in coping with this and other problems of blockading:

From the letter of Nicias, commander in chief of the Athenian forces besieging Syracuse, to the Athenian people:

"Our fleet was originally in first-rate condition: the ships were sound and the crews in good order, but now, as the enemy are well aware, the timbers of the ships, having been so long exposed to the sea, are soaked, and the efficiency of the crews is destroyed. We have no means of drawing up our vessels and airing them, because the enemy's fleet is equal or even superior in numbers to our own, and we are always expecting an attack from them. They are clearly trying their strength; they can attack us when they please, and they have far greater facilities for drying their ships, since they are not, like us, engaged in a blockade." — Thucydides, VII, 12.

great crises of ancient history — in the Persian invasion of Greece and in the Punic wars — sea power played a decisive and controlling part; and that throughout the whole of antiquity the Greeks, the Romans, and other peoples lavished incalculable treasure and energy in equipping and maintaining navies and in striving for that armed control of the sea which was thought scarcely less important than military supremacy on land.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE: Our knowledge of ancient naval science is gleaned from a wide range of Greek and Latin writers, whose main theme and interest, for the most part, were other than the sea. Some of the great historians, it is true, appear consciously to have shed light on the subject. Thucydides and Polybius, in their exhaustive and detailed accounts of the Peloponnesian and Punic wars, seem at times deliberately to record for future ages the more salient features of naval science as observed by them in two of the most active periods of ancient sea warfare. Herodotus, Xenophon, and other historians, consciously or unconsciously, perform the same service in lesser degree; all, however, are virtually silent on such matters as ship construction, arrangement of oars, etc. — matters which were clear and obvious to them and their contemporaries but which now are problems of the greatest perplexity. It is only by collecting and piecing together the chance references, the casual allusions of hundreds of poets, dramatists, philosophers, travelers, and geographers, together with the more pertinent statements of historians and the brief definitions of lexicographers, that a fairly accurate though still incomplete idea can be formed of ancient warships, of the personnel who manned them, and of their handling in time of war.

This is a subject, however, to which modern classical scholars have devoted much time and pains. It is no exaggeration to

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say that a small library of volumes relating to ancient ships and naval science has been published. As many of these as I have found of value are listed separately in the bibliography at the end of this book; it is sufficient here to cite a few of the more important works. The most careful and thorough study of Greek and Roman warships is undoubtedly Mr. Cecil Torr's "Ancient Ships", a veritable mine of illuminating classical scholarship. Scarcely less important is Monsieur A. Cartault's "La Trière Athénienne — Étude d'Archeologie Navale", which, though primarily a study of the Athenian trireme, has much to say on ancient warships generally, and contains stores of information on the subjects of personnel, naval administration, and the like. Upon these two careful and painstaking works of scholarship, I have largely relied for aid in sifting, controlling, and supplementing the mass of material on the science of ancient sea warfare that I have gathered from my reading of Greek and Roman writers. I have also found helpful and suggestive — particularly for ancient naval tactics and strategy — Admiral Sir Reginald Custance's "War At Sea — Modern Theory and Ancient Practice", Mr. A. B. Cook's article "Ships" in "A Companion to Greek Studies", and Chapter I of Messrs. Stevens and Westcott's "A History of Sea Power."

PART ONE

GREECE

Of the two divisions of the world accessible to man, the land and the sea, there is one of which you are absolute masters, and have, or may have, the dominion to any extent which you please. Neither the Great King nor any nation on earth can hinder a navy like yours from penetrating whithersoever you choose to sail.

Speech of PERICLES to the Athenians, 430 B.C.

SECTION I. EARLY PHŒNICIAN AND GREEK NAVIES, *circa* 1500 B.C. TO 499 B.C.

The story of sea power — nearly as old probably as civilization itself — assumes dramatic interest and world-historical importance first about 500 B.C., at the beginning of the classic struggle between Greece and Persia. Fleets of war had existed, fair-sized naval battles had been fought, long before that date; but the records of these are so scanty, the details so sparse, that a chronological narrative would perforce be little more than a catalogue of dates and events, of small interest to the reader and of minor import historically. I shall therefore pass rapidly over the periods of early Phœnician and Grecian sea history, confining myself to a brief summary and generalization, and enter upon the narrative proper at the outset of the Græco-Persian War.

The first historic sea people claiming our attention are the Phœnicians, the "men of Tyre and Sidon." A comparatively small nation dwelling in a narrow strip on the Syrian coast, between the mountains and the Mediterranean, their empire lay on the sea, its islands, and its remote shores. By the tenth century B.C. they had pushed their commerce to every part of the Mediterranean, and their factories and colonies — of which the foremost was Carthage — lined the shores of modern Barbary, southern and eastern Spain, the Balearic Isles, Sardinia, Corsica, and Sicily. Phœnician traders and explorers sailed past the Pillars of Hercules and penetrated as far north as Britain and possibly the Baltic; while the well-established fact of Phœnician circumnavigation of Africa stands as an eternal monument to the skill and daring of the Semitic mariners.¹

A peaceful people on the whole, avid for gain and somewhat lacking in military qualities, they fought as a rule only in defense of their trade or for the protection of their colonies. They yielded in turn to the yokes of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia, paying nominal tribute to those empires in peace, and serving them in war with contingents of ships and sailors. In the latter connection, as naval auxiliaries of Persia, they came into direct national conflict with the Greeks.

¹ Herodotus, IV, 42-43; Rawlinson, "Story of Phœnicia", Chap. 12; Grote, "History of Greece", III, p. 283 *et seq.*

The naval development of the Greeks, like their civilization, begins at a much later date than that of the Phœnicians. In early times, it is certain, they were a pastoral and agricultural rather than a maritime people. The Homeric Greeks shrank from long voyages and held the sea in horror.¹ The configuration of their country, however, its numerous bays, inlets, and flanking islands, drew them irresistibly to the sea, and about the beginning of the historic period they began to venture more daringly upon the water.² From Phœnician traders and sailors they acquired advanced knowledge of ship-building and navigation, and the lust for maritime commercial enterprise. Sailing from the Greek mainland to the islands and Asiatic coasts of the Ægean, they drove the Phœnician merchants from those parts, and following westward in their tracks, rapidly colonized southern Italy and Sicily, and extended their commerce west and north to Spain and Gaul.

As a result of these activities, a number of considerable naval powers early arose in Greece. Corinth, admirably situated for trade on the isthmus of that name, was the first important naval state of continental Greece. She made notable advances in navi-

¹ Holm, "History of Greece", I, p. 169.

² With an area little more than twice Sicily's and less than half that of the State of New York, the peninsula of Greece has a coast line equal to all of Spain's and Portugal's. "*La Grèce est*," says Sismondi ("*Repubs. Ital.*," II, p. 373), "*de tous les pays de l'Europe, celui qui appelle le plus fortement à la navigation. Dans tous les temps, ses îles nombreuses et ses longs rivages ont fourni des marins expérimentés.*"

gation and led the way among the Greeks in the construction of triremes — long galleys with three banks of oars — the line-of-battle ship of the ancient Greek world. Her navy was used to defend her commerce and to protect and restrain her numerous, widespreading colonies. The first naval battle on record in Greek history was fought in 664 B.C. between the fleets of Corinth and her rebellious colony Corcyra.¹ Athens, Ægina, Chalcis, Eretria, and a few other city-states of continental Greece also possessed fleets in early times, though distinctly inferior in size and efficiency to Corinth's.

It was beyond the borders of Greece proper, however, that the early Greek naval power rose to its highest pitch. Minos, the semi-legendary island-king of Crete, is credited with being the first to establish a supremacy over the Ægean, which he cleared of pirates and established in order and security.² His reign was followed by centuries of maritime anarchy and confusion, out of which, about 800 B.C., emerged a number of important naval powers among the Ægean islands and the Greek city-states of Asia Minor. Among these, Miletus and Phocæa led the way, and have been well compared in their commercial rivalry to mediæval Venice and Genoa.

¹ Thucydides, I, 13.

² Herodotus, III, 122; Thucydides, I, 4. It seems probable, however, in the light of modern archæological research, that Minos was the name of several or many kings of Crete, under whom a redoubtable sea power and a rich civilization flourished for unknown centuries. See Baikie's "The Sea-Kings of Crete."

Miletus was the greatest colonizing power of early Greece, her settlements stretching from the Crimea and the Sea of Azov in the north, to Egypt in the south, and Sicily in the west. Phocæa, unable from her rival's jealousy to establish herself securely in the Black Sea region, turned her efforts toward the west, where, after founding Marseilles about the beginning of the sixth century B.C., her seamen defeated the combined fleets of Carthage and Etruria in a great naval battle off Corsica.¹

Both Miletus and Phocæa were eclipsed about the middle of the sixth century by another naval power, Samos, the career of whose tyrant, Polycrates, is among the most brilliant and meteoric in the sea annals of Greece. Seizing by a *coup d'état* the supreme power of the State, he immediately devoted his energies to the construction of a fleet, by means of which he defeated the squadrons of Miletus and Lesbos and gained almost absolute control of the sea. With his navy he cruised unopposed through the Ægean, plundering the islands and coasts, and robbing friend and foe alike. He said he could gain more gratitude by restoring what he had taken than by taking nothing at all. From a piratical beginning, he soon developed a sea dominion extending widely over the Ægean and levied tribute on both its commerce and its inhabitants. Allying himself with the rising power of Athens, he repulsed a powerful Spartan armament sent against

¹ Herodotus, I, 163-167; Thucydides, I, 13.



MAP OF THE WESTERN



MEDITERRANEAN SEA

him. What effect his power, had it lasted, would have had on the nearing conflict with Persia, it is idle to speculate. Certain it is that the Persians saw in him a formidable obstacle and cast about to destroy him. He was undone by a trick. Lured by cupidity into the power of his enemies, he was seized by the Persians and crucified (522 B.C.). With him the power of Samos fell at a stroke.¹

SECTION II. THE GRÆCO-PERSIAN WAR, 499 B.C. TO 449 B.C.

Twenty-three years after the death of Polycrates, the prologue of the Græco-Persian War opened. The Greek sea-coast cities of Asia Minor, which Cyrus the Great had added to the Persian Empire in 545 B.C., rose in revolt against their foreign masters (499 B.C.). They were encouraged and to some extent abetted by their kinsmen of European Greece, particularly the Athenians, who, by their open support of the rebels, drew upon themselves the choice wrath of the Persian king.

In the conflict ensuing — known in history as the Ionic Revolt and largely naval in character — the Asiatic Greeks were at first successful but succumbed finally before their besetting racial vices, internal jealousy, and dissension. The decisive battle at sea was fought off Lade, near Miletus, in 497 B.C., six hundred Phœnician vessels in Persian

¹ Herodotus, III, 39-61, 120-125; Thucydides, I, 13.

service¹ meeting and defeating 353 Asiatic Greek galleys. Outnumbered and defeated though they were, the Greeks yet showed a marked individual superiority and would certainly have won the day, had not part of their fleet sailed away treacherously at the beginning of the fight and left the rest to struggle against hopeless odds. As a result of this battle, Miletus was taken and destroyed and Asia Minor with the neighboring islands again fell completely under Persian rule.²

An even more important result of Lade, however, was to awaken in the peoples of European Greece a sense of the perils confronting them. Not only were Athens, Sparta, Corinth, and other city-states of Greece now threatened with the myriad hosts of Persia on land, but with the combined fleets of Phœnicia, Asia Minor, and Egypt on the sea, which, holding the command of the Ægean, might harry their coasts, sack their cities, and intercept supplies, while the land forces of Persia in coöperation undertook the conquest of the interior.

In the face of this danger, there arose in Athens, soon to become the leading naval State of Greece, a resourceful and patriotic statesman, Themistocles. Sensing the supreme importance of sea power in the coming conflict, he bent all his efforts to creating a navy sufficient to cope with that controlled by Persia. His first act as archon for the year 493 B.C.

¹ "The Persians themselves were not at all acquainted with maritime affairs." Herodotus, I, 143.

² Herodotus, VI, 1-34.

was to improve and fortify the triple harbor of Piræus, or port of Athens, which he designed as a haven and dockyard for the Athenian fleet. A ruinous war which Athens was waging at this time with the neighboring island-city of Ægina served as an excuse for an increase in naval power. Athens was weak for lack of money, but when presently a large revenue flowed in unexpectedly from state-owned silver mines in southern Attica, Themistocles persuaded his countrymen to vote these funds for the enlargement of the navy. Work was begun immediately, and two hundred triremes were ready against the day of Salamis.¹

Long before that time, however, the Persian aggressions had begun. A large army under Mardonius, son-in-law of King Darius, entered Thrace in August, 492 B.C., accompanied by a powerful fleet along the shore. The fleet was wrecked in rounding the promontory of Mount Athos, while the troops were decimated by a night attack of the Thracians. Thus weakened in force and shorn of naval support, Mardonius was forced to abandon his main object — the conquest of Greece — and content himself with the subjugation of Thrace and Macedon.²

A second expedition commanded by Datis and Artaphernes, numbering six hundred ships and one hundred and ten thousand men, set sail from the Hellespont in the spring of 490 B.C. Crossing

¹ Herodotus, VII, 144; Plutarch, "Themistocles", IV.

² Herodotus, VI, 44, 45.

the Ægean and taking Naxos, Eretria, and other island cities *en route*, the fleet stood toward the coast of Attica and made a landing on the plain of Marathon. Though severely beaten in the famous battle there by the Athenian infantry, the Persians were yet able, thanks to their command of the sea, to re-embark with the greater part of their forces; and by a rapid sail round the Cape of Sunium they came within an ace of capturing Athens by surprise. Foiled in this by the swift march of the Athenians overland from Marathon, they abandoned the Greek coast and returned to Asia.¹

Far from discouraging them, these checks served only to incite the Persian monarchs to greater and more dangerous efforts. Armaments surpassed in magnitude only by the forces of the late World War were levied during the decade following Marathon and assembled in the regions around the Hellespont. The sea forces of King Xerxes in the great invasion of 480 B.C., according to Herodotus, amounted to 1207 triremes and 3000 penteconters, triëconters, light boats, and transports, the whole being manned by 481,400 sailors of subject nations and 36,210 Persians serving as marines. One fourth and the most formidable part of this armament was furnished by the Phœnicians, the remainder by the Egyptians, Cyprians, Cilicians, Pamphylians, Lycians, and various subject Greeks of Asia Minor.² To avoid

¹ Herodotus, VI, 94-116.

² Herodotus, VII, 89-100, 184-185; Diodorus, XI, Chap. 1.

the dangers of a passage round the Cape of Mt. Athos, a canal was cut through the Isthmus of Chalcidice at Acanthus, through which two triremes might pass abreast.¹

Against so colossal an armament, directed by the impulse of a single will, the Greeks could oppose but 324 triremes and 9 penteconters, contributed by the members of a loosely bound confederacy.² Two hundred newly built warships were furnished by the Athenians, the bulk of the remainder by the Corinthians, Megarians, Æginetans, Sicyonians, and Lacedæmonians.

Despite the fact that the Athenians furnished three fifths of the entire fleet and could rightfully claim the command, the Peloponnesian or south Greek contingents refused to be led by any but a Spartan, though Sparta as the head of Lacedæmon supplied but ten ships. This dispute, which threatened for a time to disrupt the confederacy, was terminated by the Athenians patriotically yielding and submitting to the command of the Spartan Eurybiades. Themistocles, however, was the soul and moving spirit of the armament.³

¹ Herodotus, VII, 22-24.

² The numbers of the Greek fleet dispatched to Artemisium are given by Herodotus (VIII, 1-3) as 271 triremes and 9 penteconters; but 53 additional triremes from Athens arrived in time to take part in the second and third days' battles of Artemisium. The numbers given by Diodorus are approximately the same, and evidently are a copy in round numbers of Herodotus.

³ Diodorus, XI, 12.

The Greek fleet, thus constituted and led, was dispatched by the Council of the Greek States early in the summer of 480 B.C. to Artemisium at the northern end of the island of Euboea, on the east coast of Greece, to block the advance of the enemy through the straits and to guard the flank and rear of the small Greek land force under Leonidas at the Pass of Thermopylæ.

The Persian fleet, meanwhile, after amusing Xerxes with the spectacle of a sham sea fight off Abydos, had sailed from the Hellespont late in the spring. Accompanying the march of the army along the coast of Thrace as far as Acanthus, it sailed through the newly cut canal of Athos, and rounding the western peninsulas of Chalcidice shaped its course for Thermæ,¹ on the Thermaic Gulf. Considerable naval accessions were there received from the Thracian and Chalcidian cities,² and with these, on the arrival of the army overland from Thrace, the fleet again weighed anchor and bore southward. Near Scyathus three Greek scout ships were surprised and captured; but further on, along the Magnesian coast, a terrific gale assailed the Persian armada as it lay at night off shore, and wrecked some four hundred warships and numerous transports.³

¹ The modern Salonica.

² These cities, says Herodotus, furnished 120 ships manned by 24,000 men. Herodotus, VII, 185.

³ Herodotus, VII, 188; Diodorus (XI, 12) says that three hundred warships were lost and a great many transports.

Meantime the Greek seamen at Artemisium had fallen prey to the liveliest fears and misgivings. The overwhelming numbers of the Persians terrified them, and learning by fire signals of the fate of their scout ships they decided to retire to the narrow passage of the Euripus, some fifty miles south, and there await the attack of the enemy. The news of the Persian shipwreck, however, enheartened them, and giving thanks to their god Boreas for his favor they returned to their post at Artemisium.¹ Next day fortune rewarded them, for a detached Persian squadron of fifteen ships, mistaking the Greek fleet for its own, was surrounded by them and taken.

Despite this success, the courage or the patriotism of some of the Greek admirals again failed them, and only by extraordinary measures could Themistocles keep the fleet at its post. Using thirty talents² which the citizens of Euboea had placed at his disposal, he bribed the commander in chief, Eurybiades, with five talents, the Corinthian admiral, Adimantus, with three, and kept the remainder for himself. The fleet continued at its station.³

The Persians, having partially recovered from the effects of the storm, though greatly exhausted, took up their position near Aphetæ, off the mainland

¹ Herodotus, VII, 182, 192.

² The talent was equivalent in metallic weight or value to approximately \$1200, though possessing from ten to fifteen times the present purchasing power of money.

³ Herodotus, VIII, 4, 5; Plutarch "Themistocles", VII.

opposite Artemisium. Their admirals, thinking to destroy the Greek fleet to a unit, sent two hundred ships south to circumnavigate the island of Euboea and take the Greeks from the rear, while their main fleet waited to attack simultaneously in front.¹

Learning of this move, the Greek admirals resolved at once to test the mettle of their enemies. Sailing out at dusk, they took the Persians by surprise, and by skillful maneuvering and superb seamanship broke through their line and returned to Artemisium with thirty captured galleys. A like combat with favorable results to the Greeks was repeated the following day; but on the third day, the Persians themselves took the offensive, advancing to the attack in a crescent formation. The Greeks, operating in the narrow straits, fought on equal terms with their numerically superior foe, and by repeated charges inflicted enormous damage on his crowded galleys.² But their own losses were heavy; five Greek vessels had been taken and half the Athenian division disabled. When night put an end to the fighting, the battle, though glorious and favorable to the Greeks, was indecisive in its results.³

In spite of these partial successes, in spite of the news now received of the total wreck of the Persian enveloping squadron sent round Euboea, the Greek admirals during the night after the battle decided

¹ Herodotus, VIII, 6, 7; Diodorus (XI, 12) gives the number of the Persian enveloping squadron as three hundred sail.

² Herodotus, VIII, 8-12.

³ Herodotus, VIII, 17.

upon a withdrawal. As Themistocles clearly acquiesced in this decision, its explanation is to be found in the turn of the land operations. Awful tidings had reached the fleet. The Pass of Thermopylæ had been stormed, its heroic defenders annihilated, and the march of Xerxes' army into central Greece had begun, on the day of the third naval combat at Artemisium. As the Greek fleet had now no immediate army to coöperate with and could in no way prevent the Persian advance into Greece, its position at Artemisium had become strategically worthless. For the Persian fleet, if unable to force a passage through the straits, might with favorable weather sail round the east of Euboea, and thence descend upon Attica or block the egress of the Greek fleet from the Euripus.¹ In view of these possibilities, as well as the serious losses they had sustained, the Greek admirals deemed it prudent to retire to the Attic coast, where, in a secure haven, their triremes might be repaired and preparations made for the final struggle.²

The place whither the admirals, acting on the advice of Themistocles,³ withdrew after the battles of Artemisium, was the Bay of Salamis, a landlocked harbor wedged between the island of Salamis and the Attic-Megarian coast — a spot already memor-

¹ Nepos, "Themistocles", III.

² Herodotus, VIII, 18-21; Plutarch, "Themistocles", IX; Diodorus, XI, 13.

³ Herodotus, VII, 143, 144.

able as the scene of an important victory of the Athenians over the Megarians. With its ample anchorage, its narrow, tortuous entrance, and its practical security from rear attack, it was an ideal place for a battle of an inferior against a superior fleet. Sheltered in its recesses, the Greeks might safely repair their galleys and await the enemy's coming, or sally forth at pleasure.

While the Greeks were refitting at Salamis, events on land were happening which powerfully affected the turn of the sea operations. The Persian army, advancing unopposed from Thermopylæ, had passed rapidly through Bœotia and crossed the borders of Attica. No force was available to check it, as the main Greek army under Spartan leadership lay intrenched on the Isthmus of Corinth, while the Athenian land forces were hardly sufficient even to defend their capital.

In this crisis, while the Persians were rapidly closing upon Athens, the Athenians, under the inspiration of Themistocles, adopted a course as bold and heroic as was ever taken by a free people. Abandoning their homes and their country, they conveyed their women and children and old men to safe places in Ægina, Salamis, and the Peloponnesus; while the manhood, the armed strength of the nation, took its stand on the fleet.¹ The navy had become the ark and the fatherland of the people,

¹ Herodotus, VII, 143; VIII, 40, 41; Diodorus, XI, 15; Plutarch, "Themistocles", X.

the decisive battle for Greece was to be fought on the water.

The Persian fleet, after the retirement of the Greeks from Artemisium, had navigated the Euripus, and rounding the Cape of Sunium, anchored off Phalerum, some eight miles west of Salamis and directly seaward from Athens. There, shortly after its arrival, it was joined by the van of Xerxes' army, which, with the monarch himself in command, had ravaged Attica and occupied deserted Athens.¹

Despite losses from storm and battle, the Persian fleet was now probably two thirds as large as that which had sailed from the Hellespont, and little if any less than the numbers which had fought at Artemisium. Strong reënforcements, as we have seen, had joined it from Thrace and Chalcidice, and fresh squadrons had more recently arrived from Carystus, Andros, and the Cyclades.²

The Greeks, too, had repaired their fleet, which now was strengthened by the arrival of a fresh squadron from Troezen. The grand total of their sea forces on the eve of Salamis comprised 378 triremes and 7 penteconters.³

¹ Herodotus, VIII, 66.

² *Ibid.*

³ Herodotus, VIII, 42-48. Æschylus, in his *Persæ* (vv. 340-346), gives the number of Xerxes' ships at Salamis as 1207, and of the Greek fleet as 300. The first, which is the number of the Persian triremes sailing from the Hellespont, is manifestly an error. Neither in this nor in other statements is Æschylus, the poet and dramatist, seeking inspiration rather than facts, to receive equal credence with the diligent investigator Herodotus.

On the shores of Phalerum, near to Athens, a solemn council of the Persian fleet was summoned and presided over by Xerxes. Exultant in his successes and confident of victory, the monarch demanded of each of the admirals his advice, and confidently awaited the answer. All save one, whether from servility or conviction, voted in favor of immediate battle at sea. The sole dissenter from this opinion was the admiral-queen Artemisia, who, with five ships from Halicarnassus, had fought bravely at Artemisium, and who now, with rare judgment and spirit, advised that the fleet should abstain from the offensive at sea, but coöperate with the Persian land forces in an attack on the Peloponnesus. The Peloponnesian naval contingents, she maintained, would then immediately scatter and sail for their home cities, and resistance at sea would be at an end. This plan, which lacked only in the brilliant and spectacular, was by far the best and most practicable strategy open to the Persians. It possessed all the elements requisite to success, and it barely missed of realization in the very teeth of Xerxes' blindness and stupidity. For the Peloponnesian contingents, as will be seen, *would* presently have scattered to their cities. Undisputed command of the sea would then have passed to Xerxes, and the Greek cause, as a result, would probably have been irreparably ruined. Even had the Greek fleet remained united at Salamis, the Persian navy, acting on the defensive, could, by reason of its vast numeri-

cal superiority, have bid defiance to the Greeks indefinitely in the open; and by thus holding partial command of the sea, could fulfill its main purpose as an auxiliary of the army, by protecting the latter's flanks and communications, by bringing up supplies by sea, and by transporting troops to take the fortifications and the defenders of the Isthmus in the rear.

Convincing as this course appeared to Artemisia, and to many of the admirals in secret, its advantages were unperceived by Xerxes, intent on the annihilation of the Greek armament. While respecting the sincerity of Artemisia, he held with the council's servile majority and gave his decision for battle.¹

Simultaneously another council, far different in character and procedure, was being held aboard the Greek flagship at Salamis. Dissension and discord therein reigned supreme. Most of the Peloponnesian admirals, including the commander in chief Eurybiades, favored withdrawing to the Isthmus of Corinth and giving battle near the flank of the Greek army, alleging that if defeated at Salamis they would be besieged in that island and completely destroyed.² Themistocles, on the other hand, contended that Salamis was the best position for a naval battle in Greece, and that a withdrawal would expose large numbers of Athenian refugees in Salamis,

¹ Herodotus, VIII, 67-69.

² Herodotus, VIII, 49; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XI; Diodorus, XI,

as well as Megara and Ægina, to the enemy's attack.¹

In the midst of this debate details were received of the devastation of Attica and the entrance of the Persians into Athens. The news threw the council and the entire fleet into a panic of fear, and the Peloponnesian admirals, anxious for their homes and families, determined to set sail the following morning. Pleadings, arguments, threats by Themistocles were in vain: the Peloponnesians were fixed in their resolution.

And now, when ordinary measures had failed and hope itself had all but vanished, Themistocles resorted to a stratagem which in its daring and originality proved him of the very essence of genius. Going secretly out of the Greek council, he dispatched a servant in a skiff to the Persian camp under pretense of being a deserter with the message that the Greeks were on the point of fleeing in great consternation, and that now was the time when the Persians might achieve a decisive victory if only they would not suffer the Greeks to slip from their clutches.

This message was reported to Xerxes, who swallowed the bait immediately. Orders were sent to the Persian squadrons to draw a close blockade around Salamis and to land a strong garrison on the islet of Psyttalea in the harbor's entrance. At the

¹ Herodotus, VIII, 60; Diodorus, XI, 16; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XI, and "Aristides", VIII.

same time the monarch commanded that a throne be erected on the mainland opposite Salamis, whence, surrounded by his bodyguard of Ten Thousand Immortals and arrayed in the majesty of the morning sun, he might view the total destruction of the Greek fleet.^{1, 2}

Great was the dismay on board the Peloponnesian vessels preparing to depart when early in the morning, the report arrived that the Persian galleys were covering all the sea and that every outlet from Salamis was closed.³ The report, which was at first discredited, was confirmed in the graying light by a Tenian trireme deserting from the enemy. All thought of flight was at once abandoned and preparations were made for immediate battle. With the crashing of oars, the rattling of capstans and the clearing of decks, the galleys got under way and ranged in order near the harbor's mouth. The Athenians took their station on the western or left

¹ Herodotus, VIII, 50, 56, 61, 75, 76; Diodorus, XI, 18; Æschylus' "Persæ", vv. 356-373; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XII.

² "A king sat on the rocky brow,

Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;

And ships by thousands lay below,

And men in nations; — all were his!

He counted them at break of day —

And when the sun set, where were they?"

³ Herodotus, VIII, 78-81; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XII and XIII; also his "Aristides", VIII. The bearer of this report was Aristides, Themistocles' great enemy and rival. Having recently been recalled from exile on the latter's motion, he had crossed from Ægina in a small boat, barely passing through the Persian blockade, and brought the news which Themistocles so much desired. The meeting of the rivals, as told by Plutarch, is most dramatic.

wing, next their country, the Spartans and Ægine-tans on the right, and the other contingents in the center.¹

At sunrise,² the Persian fleet in three lines advanced from the southeast into Salamis harbor. The Phœnicians occupied the right wing, the Egyptians the center, and the subject Greeks and other races of Asia Minor the left. The whole fleet was commanded by the Persian princes, Aribiagnes and Achæmenes, brothers of Xerxes.

The Greeks, at sight of the enemy, at first began backing water and retiring into the bay; but an Athenian captain, named Aminias of Pallene, suddenly darting from the line, drove the bronze beak of his ship athwart a Phœnician trireme; and the whole Greek fleet, inspired by his example, followed after him and engaged.³

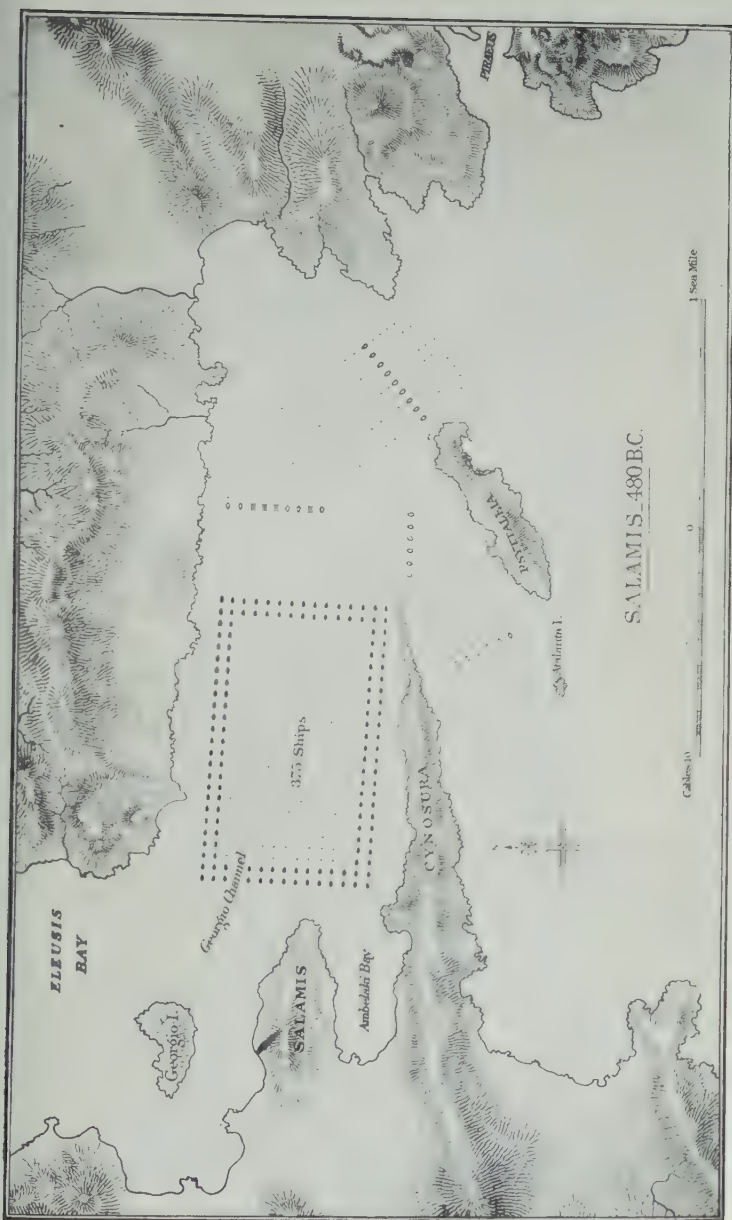
Then, in the immortal words of Æschylus, there —

Rose from the Hellenes
Loud chant of cry of battle, and forthwith
Echo gave answer from each island rock;
And terror then on all the Persians fell,
Of fond hopes disappointed. Not in flight
The Hellenes then their solemn pæan sang:
But with brave spirit hastening on to battle,
With martial sound the trumpet fired those ranks:

¹ Herodotus, VIII, 82; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XIII.

² Considerable doubt exists as to the exact date of Salamis. Curtius and Duruy give it as the 19th of Boedromion, or the 20th of September; Holm, as September 27 or 28, 480 B.C.

³ Herodotus, VIII, 84.



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF SALAMIS, 480 B.C.

From Admiral Sir Ronald Custance's "War at Sea. Modern Theory and Ancient Practice," by permission of the publishers, Wm. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh



And straight with sweep of oars that flew through foam,
They smote the loud waves at the boatswain's call;
And swiftly all were manifest to sight.
Then first their right wing moved in order meet;
Next the whole line its forward course began,
And all at once we heard a mighty shout, —
*“O sons of Hellenes, forward, free your country;
Free too your wives, your children, and the shrines
Built to your fathers' Gods, and holy tombs
Your ancestors now rest in. Now the fight
Is for our all.”* And on our side indeed
Arose in answer din of Persian speech,
And time to wait was over: ship on ship
Dashed its bronze-pointed beak, and first a barque
Of Hellas did the encounter fierce begin,
And from Phœnician vessel crashes off
Her carved prow. And each against his neighbor
Steers his own ship: and first the mighty flood
Of Persian host held out. But when the ships
Were crowded in the straits, nor could they give
Help to each other, they with mutual shocks,
With beaks of bronze went crushing each the other,
Shivering their rowers' benches. And the ships
Of Hellas, with manœuvring not unskillful,
Charged circling round them. And the hulls of ships
Floated capsized, nor could the sea be seen,
Filled, as it was, with wrecks and carcasses;
And all the shores and rocks were full of corpses,
And every ship was wildly rowed in flight,
All that composed the Persian armament.
And they, as men spear tunnies, or a haul
Of other fishes, with the shafts of oars,

Or spars of wrecks went smiting, cleaving down ;
And bitter groans and wailings overspread
The wide sea-waves, till eye of swarthy night
Bade it all cease : and for the mass of ills,
Not, though my tale should run for ten full days,
Could I in full recount them. Be assured
That never yet so great a multitude
Died in a single day as died in this.¹

In such magnificently poetic and patriotic language, the poet, who himself fought at Salamis, describes the action. Less inspiring, yet perhaps more accurate, are the descriptions of Herodotus, of Plutarch, and of Diodorus. I shall briefly narrate the combat from their accounts.

The Persian galleys, heavy in construction and overwhelming in their numbers, forged at first irresistibly down the channel and forced the Greeks, fighting desperately, to retire before them. As squadron after squadron of the Asiatics, however, swarmed into the narrow straits, confusion set in amongst them and progress ceased ; oars were shattered and broken ; and when in the middle of the morning a stiff breeze arose and a heavy swell rolled in from the Ægean the disorder in the Persian fleet became inextricable. The Greeks, who kept their line and handled their ships with admirable skill, were quick to take advantage of the enemy's embarrassment ; they drew back their line at a given

¹ Æschylus, "Persæ" (Plumptre's translation), vv. 386-435. The speaker of the lines is a Persian messenger addressing Atossa, the mother of Xerxes.

signal, then at tremendous speed drove their galleys into the crowded Persian ranks. This maneuver they repeated again and again, causing greater damage on each occasion.

The Persians, in this predicament, fought for a time bravely and obstinately. They were conscious of the eyes of Xerxes and both feared his wrath and desired his approval. Even the Asiatic Greek contingent, though some showed signs of defection, battled for the most part valiantly for their despotic master. Yet Asiatic Greek, Phœnician, Egyptian, and other subject races of Persia all lacked utterly the spirit of patriotism, the will to die rather than to yield, which animated the free Greeks of Europe and especially the Athenians. So, when the fight became hopeless, or seemingly hopeless, they lost heart completely and thought only of flight. Flesh and blood, indeed, unless animated by the purest patriotism, could hardly bear the hell that now raged around them. The Persian fleet had become a rout of sinking, struggling ships, amongst whom the sole effort was to get clear and reach the sea. The slaughter was tremendous, thousands falling by the swords of the Greeks or drowning in the sea. Many of the Persians of highest rank perished, among them the admiral Ariabignes. Queen Artemisia, whose conduct in the fight won the praises of Xerxes himself, escaped by ramming a Persian galley and passing through her. The majority of the van, however, lacked her good fortune and were either sunk or

captured. The ships in the rear, unable to aid those in front, withdrew in the afternoon to Phalerum and beached under the protection of the army. Toward the close of the battle a body of Greek heavy-armed troops, commanded by the Athenian Aristides, was landed on the islet of Psyttaleia and put the Persian garrison there to the sword.¹

Such, so far as may be gleaned from the meager sources, was the famous battle of Salamis. More than any of the great combats of the Persian War, Salamis was decisive in its effect on that struggle and on history. Marathon, indeed, had proved for all time the individual superiority of Greek over Persian, of European over Asiatic; but that superiority had already been shown, though less clearly, at Lade and elsewhere. The great land battle of Plataea in the following year, it is true, rid Greece forever of the Persian hordes and changed the war for her from a defensive into an offensive war. But only by the naval victory of Salamis was Plataea made possible. For in sea supremacy lay the key of the situation; and Salamis, by transferring the sovereignty of the sea from the Persians to the Greeks, necessitated the withdrawal of a large part of Xerxes' army, dependent on the fleet for most

¹ Herodotus, VIII, 84-95; Diodorus, XI, 17-19; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XIV and XV. See also W. W. Goodwin, "The Battle of Salamis", in "Harvard Studies in Classical Philology", Vol. XVII, 1906. G. B. Grundy in "The Great Persian War" also gives an excellent critical account of the battle, together with a discussion of the sources from which the materials are derived.

of its supplies, impaired the communications of the remainder of the army, and enabled the Greeks to choose both time and place for the final combat. Even had the Persians won at Plataea, they must ultimately have retreated, since without a superior naval force they could never have carried the fortifications on the Isthmus, or have long supported themselves in Central Greece. Such was the contemporary opinion of the Greeks as reflected by Æschylus in his "Persæ" and by Herodotus in his "History"; and many modern historians have held with the judgment of those master minds.¹

Decisive as was the character of Salamis, it was in its moral rather than in its material results that the decision lay. The losses of vanquished and victors were not far from unequal, proportionately. Two hundred Persian galleys had been sunk and perhaps half as many more captured; while the Greeks had lost forty ships and probably had as many more disabled.² In the matter of *matériel*, then, Xerxes' fleet was comparatively little worse off than before the battle. But while the Greeks were victorious and triumphant, the morale of the Persians was crushed and broken. The crews would no longer face the victors and desired only to escape from their

¹ Æschylus, "Persæ", v. 730; Herodotus, VII, 139; Thucydides, I, 73; Grundy, "The Great Persian War", pp. 406-407; Grote, IV, 491; Abbott, "History of Greece", II, 190-191; Mommsen, "History of Rome", I, 415; Sir Cyprian Bridge, "Sea Power and Other Studies", pp. 10-11.

² Diodorus, XI, 19.

reach.¹ The Phœnician contingent, terrified by the harsh treatment and the reproaches of Xerxes, slipped their cables secretly at night and sailed for home.²

The king, too, fearful of the intentions of the Greeks, now lost courage and resolved on flight. In order to conceal his purpose, he began the construction of a mole from the mainland across to Salamis and made pretense of preparing for a second sea fight. At the same time he sent orders to his fleet to sail at once for the Hellespont; while with the bulk of his army he commenced a disastrous retreat overland. Mardonius with three hundred thousand picked troops was left behind to occupy Central Greece and, if possible, to subjugate the Peloponnesus.³

The Greeks, at the close of the battle of Salamis, expecting that Xerxes would renew the fight, held themselves in readiness for a second engagement. The night and the next day, however, passed quietly, and the following morning they learned to their surprise that the Persian fleet had left Phalerum, holding its course for the Hellespont. Putting out their sweeps they started in pursuit and raced as far as Andros without catching sight of the enemy.⁴

¹ Herodotus, VII, 107.

² Diodorus, XI, 19. This story is not related by Herodotus or Plutarch, but the former's account of the beheading, at the command of Xerxes, of the Phœnician captains cast on the Attic coast during the battle of Salamis renders Diodorus' statement very likely.

³ Plutarch, "Aristides", X, and "Themistocles", XVI; Herodotus, VII, 97-107.

⁴ Herodotus, VIII, 108.

There a council of war was held, in which Themistocles gave as his opinion that the fleet should sail immediately for the Hellespont and reaching there, if possible, before the Persians, break down the bridge of boats which Xerxes had built to maintain his communications with Asia. His proposal was opposed by Eurybiades and the Peloponnesians, on the ground that it would drive the Persians to desperation and retard the day of the evacuation of Greece. To their judgment, greatly against his will, Themistocles though it expedient to yield.¹

He was not content, however, to allow his new-forged weapon of naval power to rust. Many of the Greek island cities had given naval aid to Xerxes; and these Themistocles resolved should pay in part the expenses of the war. He had become virtual commander of the fleet since Salamis; at his behest the allies now demanded of Andros a heavy fine; and on her refusing to pay laid siege to the city. At the same time Themistocles sent threatening demands to Carystus, Paros, and other island-cities, from which he succeeded in collecting large sums, part of which he kept for himself. He was unable, however, to reduce Andros, and raising the siege returned to Salamis.²

There a division of the booty was made; and following the Greek custom the fleet then sailed to the Isthmus to award the palms of valor and merit

¹ Herodotus, VIII, 108-110; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XVI.

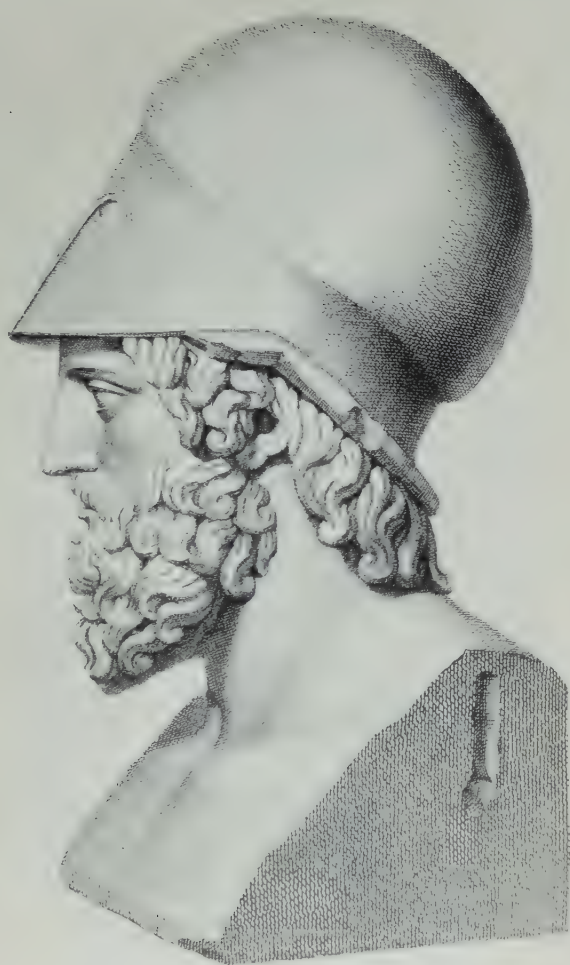
² Herodotus, VIII, 111, 112, 121; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XXI.

to the city and the individual which had proved themselves the most deserving in the war. Among the cities Ægina bore away the first prize and Athens the second.¹ But when the commanders came to place their ballots on the altar of Poseidon, each solemnly cast the first vote for himself, and the majority the second vote for Themistocles, who was thereby popularly adjudged to have received the individual award. He was now extolled and applauded, says Herodotus, throughout all Greece, and on his visit to Sparta was honored with a crown of olives, presented with a magnificent chariot, and when leaving the city escorted to the frontier by a band of three hundred of the noblest Spartan youth.²

The next summer (479 B.C.), while the Greek and Persian armies were at death-grips in Bœotia, the Greek fleet was tempted across the Ægean by the offer of Samos and other Ionian Greek communities to revolt from Xerxes. The Persian fleet had been stationed at Samos to overawe the islands; but on the approach of the Greek armament hastily withdrew to Mycale on the mainland, where the crews drew the galleys up on the beach and built a paliade around them. The Greeks coming up in pursuit, also landed, and prepared for an assault. At the moment of the charge, a mysterious rumor ran through the host to the effect that their countrymen

¹ This unjust decision was probably due to the jealousy which the Peloponnesians felt for Athens. See Diodorus, XI, 19.

² Herodotus, VIII, 93, 121-125; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XIII; Diodorus, XI, 19.



THEMISTOCLES
From an Engraving



had on that day been victorious over Mardonius in Bœotia. They were seized by supernatural courage, and sweeping forward irresistibly stormed the fortifications and put the enemy to rout. The entire Persian fleet fell into their hands and was plundered and burnt.¹

Thus the work of Salamis was completed and the Phœnico-Persian naval power for the time being annihilated. As a result, the island-cities of the Ægean, most of which for half a century had been subject to Persia, revolted and joined the Greek confederacy. But it was to Athens, the chief maritime power, rather than to Sparta, the head of the confederacy, that they looked for leadership and protection. Athens, the mother city of many of them and to which they were bound by ties of common blood, language, and customs, was alone disposed to befriend and protect them; Athens alone, with her powerful fleet and her vigorous foreign policy, could give them the requisite aid against Persian aggression.

¹ Herodotus, VIII, 130-132 and IX, 90-105; Diodorus, XI, 34-36; Justin, II, 14. The incident which Herodotus tells of the revelation of the victory of Platæa to the Greek crews before Mycale has been rejected or ridiculed by nearly all later historians, ancient or modern. The two battles were, as Herodotus states, fought on the same day, and this coincidence may have suggested itself to Herodotus as substance for further embellishment. But as Grote points out in his History (vol. V, p. 259), "the revelation, sudden, simultaneous, irresistible, struck at sense, upon the minds of all, as if the multitude had one common soul and once acquainting them that on that morning their countrymen in Bœotia had gained a complete victory over Mardonius."

The first fruits of this alliance were a further blow at Persia. The Greek fleet with its new allies sailed northward with the intention of breaking the bridge over the Hellespont, but found it already destroyed by a storm. The Peloponnesian contingents then returned home; but the Athenians, in company with the Samians, Chians, Lesbians, and other islanders, laid siege to the Persian stronghold of Sestos on the Hellespont and took it after two months' investment. Then dismissing their allies and leaving a garrison in the place, the Athenians returned to Attica for the winter, bearing great booty and the huge cables of the Hellespontine bridge.

The Athenians, delivered from the Persian invader, now set about restoring their ruined city and enlarging the basis of their naval power. Under the vigorous leadership of Themistocles, Athens was provided with walls of immense size and strength, which rendered her practically immune from attack. The Piræus, likewise, was further improved and fortified, and soon became the great emporium and naval base of the city. Themistocles at the same time persuaded his countrymen to maintain the strength of their fleet by adding twenty new triremes to it each year.¹

There was urgent need for these measures, though danger from Persia had almost ceased. For a growing rivalry, tintured with suspicion, had sprung up between Athens and Sparta. Athens had rendered

¹ Diodorus, XI, Chap. 6.

greater services and sacrificed more in the war than the rest of Greece combined. Her reward, now that the peril was past, was an intense jealousy and distrust on the part of the majority of the Greek States. Sparta viewed with amazement and alarm the tremendous energy and the dominant sea power which Athens had developed; and having for nearly a century been the acknowledged head of Greece, she was ill disposed to brook an equal, much less a superior.

Nor were the Athenians of a temper to bear indefinite inferiority to Sparta. They had shown sufficient forbearance and humility already, they thought. They had submitted to the Spartan overlordship at sea during the war, though their naval power was greater than that of the rest of Greece. They were conscious of heroic deeds. They were conscious also of a mighty destiny, of an unrivaled opportunity to win the empire of the sea and to establish their sway over the Eastern Mediterranean and the Euxine. They were resolved to assert their equality and their right to a place in the sun.

Soon their chance came. In the spring of 478 B.C., the Greeks decided to resume the offensive against Persia. A fleet of twenty Peloponnesian ships and thirty Athenian, together with contingents of the new insular allies, set sail under the Spartan admiral Pausanias. The expedition first went to Cyprus and expelled the Persian garrisons from the greater part of that island; then, turning northward, it

laid siege to and captured Byzantium, the key to the Black Sea regions.

At Byzantium, Pausanias entered into treasonable relations with King Xerxes, to whom he offered to betray Greece on condition of being made "tyrant" of that country and son-in-law of the king. At the same time he was oppressive and cruel to those under his authority. The Greek islanders, resenting such treatment and contrasting with it the courtesy and justice of the Athenian admirals, Cimon and Aristides, begged the latter to take over the command of the fleet and the direction of the expedition. To this the Athenians readily consented and assumed the leadership of the insular contingents. Pausanias was at the same time recalled to Sparta to answer charges against him: and when, later in the year, another Spartan admiral was sent out, the allies refused to acknowledge his authority.¹

Thus Sparta, while retaining the primacy of Greece on land, was forced to yield the leadership of the sea to Athens. The result was the immediate founding of the Athenian sea empire. A league known as the Delian Confederacy was formed between Athens and the Ionian island-cities of the Ægean and many of the Greek communities on the Asiatic mainland. The object was defensive and offensive warfare against Persia and the security of the sea from pirates. Though Athens was president and com-

¹ Thucydides, I, 94-97; Diodorus, XI, 6; Plutarch, "Aristides", XXIII-XXV, also his "Cimon", VI.

mander in chief, the treasury and meeting place of the league was the island of Delos. Each city was to have autonomy, to have an equal vote in the conduct of the league, and to furnish a fixed annual contribution of ships or money, according to ability. Such was the status at the beginning, but as the Athenian power increased, the allies sank gradually into the condition of subjects, and the sole voice in government was assumed by the imperial city.¹

Shortly after the formation of the Delian Confederacy, another event of memorable interest occurred. Themistocles had enjoyed since Salamis a marvelous popularity and influence. He was acknowledged the first man of Greece. He reaped the outward rewards of success. At the Olympic games of 476 B.C., when he entered the stadium, the spectators ceased watching the athletes, but spent the whole day in gazing at him or in pointing him out to strangers. Unfortunately his splendid talents and energy were marred by an inordinate vanity and a greed that grew rather than lessened with age and acquisitions. He was fond of reminding his countrymen of his services; and his enormous wealth, derived largely from bribes and exactions, was the shame of Athens and the scandal of Greece. Hence, though commanding the support of a numerous party, he made enemies on every hand. His opponents in Athens represented him as a dangerous man to the State and procured his ostracism by the

¹ Thucydides, I, 96-99; Plutarch, "Aristides", XXIV.

people in 471 B.C. He retired to Argos, but was presently forced to flee from Greece. After various wanderings he finally made his way to the court of the Persian king, where he was kindly received and assigned the revenue of three cities for his support. He died an exile in Magnesia in 449 B.C.¹

Thus Themistocles, after raising Athens from the brink of destruction to a dazzling height of greatness, was flung away in the hour of his triumph, when his genius and his powers had not yet reached their climax. His name for a time was heaped with infamy and disgrace, and his splendid achievements were slurred and belittled. In later years, however, his countrymen came to acknowledge his greatness and the exalted character of his services. He was hailed as the savior and the second founder of his country; the one who, discerning the seafaring genius and aptitude of the people, led them into the way of maritime glory and achievement.

Though deprived of the services of Themistocles, the Athenians found in Cimon, the son of Miltiades, a successor worthy to continue his work. Under his command the war was vigorously prosecuted and the Delian Confederacy held in close check. He besieged and took the Persian fortress of Eion on the river Strymon, about 470 B.C., and expelled the Persians from the coasts of Thrace. Cruising with his fleet through the Archipelago, he then swept the last vestige of Persian influence from the

¹ Thucydides, I, 135-138; Plutarch, "Themistocles", XVII *et seq.*

islands, and made the Ægean a virtual Athenian lake.¹

Some of Athens' allies now began to show signs of disaffection; the trouble lay in their unwillingness to render naval service, which, now that danger from Persia seemed past, had become grievous and burdensome. On Cimon's advice, the Athenians permitted the obligation to furnish ships to be commuted by money payments; but even that soon became irksome.² Naxos was the first ally to revolt. She had a strong navy and looked to Persia for aid; but Cimon blockaded the island and reduced it before help could arrive. The Naxians were forced to demolish their walls, give up their ships, and pay henceforth an annual tribute. Soon followed the revolt of Thasos, the cause of which was a quarrel between the Athenians and the Thasians as to certain gold mines of Thrace, in which both had an interest. Thasos was among the strongest of the confederates. She had thirty-three ships, rich possessions in Thrace, and an ambitious foreign policy. After a blockade of two years Cimon reduced the island and punished it in the same way he had Naxos.³

By such vigorous measures the sedition was nipped in the bud, and the Athenian power established more firmly than ever. About this time, too, a recrudescence of the Persian naval power infused

¹ Thucydides, I, 98; Plutarch, "Cimon", VII.

² Thucydides, I, 99; Plutarch, "Cimon", XI.

³ Botsford, "History of Greece", p. 153. For the ancient authorities see Thucydides, I, 100; Plutarch, "Cimon", XII and XIII.

greater concord and unity into the confederacy. A fleet of three hundred and fifty Phœnician galleys, intended for an attack on Ionia, assembled, in 468 B.C., off the mouth of the Eurymedon in Pamphylia. Thither Cimon sailed with three hundred Athenian and allied galleys and gained an overwhelming sea victory. Two hundred vessels, twenty thousand prisoners, and immense plunder fell into his hands. On the same day his crews landed on the coast and put to rout a large force of Persian infantry. A few days later a reënforcement of eighty Phœnician triremes, ignorant of the fate of their fellows, was also captured.¹

As a result of these victories, the Carian and Lycian coasts of Asia Minor joined the Athenian confederacy, bringing the number of allied cities up to over two hundred. Persia, panic-stricken by the crushing blows dealt her, abandoned henceforth all attempts at aggression, and strove only to maintain her conquests and defend her territories. In this policy — due principally to the intestine quarrels of the Greeks — she was fairly successful until the days of Alexander the Great.

On the other hand, the Athenians, by the very boldness of their initiative, soon brought upon themselves a terrible disaster. In 459 B.C. Egypt revolted from Persia. The Athenians, hoping to wrest the land from their enemy and to establish their own

¹ Diodorus, XI, 60-61; Thucydides, I, 100; Plutarch, "Cimon", XII and XIII.

influence there, dispatched a fleet of two hundred triremes to aid the rebels. Success at first attended them. The fleet sailed up the Nile, took Memphis, and mastered nearly the entire country. But an able Persian general, Megabyzus, arriving with a powerful army from Phœnicia, routed the Egyptian rebels, and forced the Greeks to take refuge in their fleet off the island of Prosopitis in the Nile. For some unknown reason — perhaps the blockade of a superior Phœnician fleet, or an artificial obstruction in the river — they were unable to reach the sea. And Megabyzus, by diverting the river into another course, was able to strand their galleys high and dry, and march his troops across the channel to the island. The Greeks now burnt their ships and endeavored to retreat by land. But though some succeeded in cutting their way through to Cyrene and thence reaching home, the greater part were slain or captured. Fifty additional triremes which had been sent from Athens as a reënforcement were also, a short time afterwards, entrapped by the Persians.¹

In this ill-starred expedition Cimon fortunately had had no part. Like Themistocles before him, he had incurred the displeasure of his countrymen, and had been ostracized from his city for ten years. The Athenians, however, soon repented of their action and recalled him to command their forces.

¹ Thucydides, I, 104, 109-110; Diodorus, XI, 71, 74-75, 77; Plutarch, "Cimon", XIII.

He was given two hundred triremes and sent to avenge the disaster in Egypt. Making for Cyprus, which he intended to use as a base, he defeated a large Phœnician and Cilician armament and was preparing to attack Egypt itself, when, off Citium, he suddenly fell sick and died. His last orders were to conceal his death and sail immediately for home. His officers obeyed him.¹

In Cimon the Athenians suffered a great loss; "he was their Nelson, the winner of more naval victories than any other Greek." After him the Athenians engaged no more in foreign enterprises, but turned their attention to internal improvement, and, unhappily, to strife with other Greek States. They presently concluded an arrangement with the Persian king, whereby, in return for peace, the latter agreed to send his warships no further westward than the Chelidonian Isles in Pamphylia, nor to march his troops nearer the Ægean coast than the distance of three days' journey² (*circa* 449 B.C.). Not till nearly forty years had passed, after the great disaster to the Athenian fleet in Sicilian waters, did Persia dare violate the terms of this agreement.

¹ Thucydides, I, 112; Diodorus, XII, 3; Plutarch, "Cimon", XVIII and XIX. I have followed here the chronology of Diodorus and Plutarch rather than that of Thucydides, who represents the victory as gained after Cimon's death.

² Plutarch, "Cimon", XIII and XIX; Diodorus, XII, 4.

SECTION III. THE PELOPONNESIAN WARS,
458 B.C. TO 415 B.C.

Even before the making of peace with Persia, the long-pent-up enmity between Athens and Sparta, each with her respective allies or confederates, had flamed into war. The fundamental causes of this conflict were Sparta's jealousy of the new-risen sea power of Athens and her fear of the imperialistic spirit which that power undoubtedly generated. Two different political systems or modes of life, after growing up independently in Greece, were now opposed one to the other: on the one hand was the trading, democratic power of Athens, backed by a large maritime confederacy or empire; on the other hand, the military, agricultural, oligarchical power of Sparta, heading a powerful group of land States known as the Peloponnesian League. The one ruled the sea, the other the land; yet each aspired ultimately to control its rival's element. United for the moment by the menace of Persian aggression, they had begun to drift apart the moment the danger ceased, and a long series of unfriendly acts and jealousies on either side had culminated inevitably in strife (459 B.C.).

The naval events of this conflict — the preliminary or First Peloponnesian War — are little known. It is certain, however, though her main fleet was absent on the Nile, that Athens had little trouble in asserting her supremacy in Greek waters. The decisive sea fight took place off Ægina in 458 B.C.

All that we know of it is the bare statement of Thucydides. "A great naval battle," he says, "was fought off the coast of Ægina in which the allies of both sides joined; the Athenians were victorious and captured seventy of the enemy's ships."¹ They then landed on the island and blockaded the city, which, after a year's siege, capitulated, dismantling her walls, surrendering her ships, and entering the Athenian confederacy as a tributary state.

In the remaining sea operations of this war Athens was also uniformly successful. She was able by her fleet to keep the enemy continually in suspense and to choose both time and place for ravaging his shores. A squadron under Tolmides and later another under Pericles sailed round the Peloponnesus, burned the Spartan dockyards at Gythium, and made descents at numerous points on the Peloponnesian coast. By seizing Naupactus, a strong sea fortress in Ætolia, Athens gained control of the entrance to the Corinthian Gulf and was able to shut off Peloponnesian and particularly Corinthian trade with the west. At the end of the war, though she was forced by reverses on land and the exhaustion resulting from the Egyptian disaster to purchase peace with Sparta at the price of humiliating continental concessions, her naval supremacy was unchallenged and her sea empire was increased by several valuable additions.²

¹ Thucydides, I, 105.

² Plutarch, "Cimon", XVII; Thucydides, I, 103-115.



VIEW OF THE PIRAEUS, ATHENS, AND THE LONG WALLS AT THE TIME OF THE
PELOPONNESIAN WARS

From "Pictorial History of the World," by permission of the publishers, National Publishing Co., Philadelphia

During the fourteen years of peace that followed, Athens, under the government of Pericles, rapidly recovered her strength and consolidated the bases of her naval power. Abroad, Pericles crushed a dangerous revolt of Samos, and further strengthened Athens' hold on her confederacy by forcing the majority of the allies to tear down their walls and become subject members of the Athenian empire. Trade was encouraged and *cleruchies*, or colonies, of Athenian citizens established throughout the empire. At home, Pericles completed a series of permanent "long walls", three in number, connecting Athens on the one side with Phalerum roadstead and on the other with the fortified port of Piræus. Athens and Piræus were thus inseparably joined and became "to all intents and purposes an island city, in indestructible connection with the sea, and thus able to employ all her land forces except the necessary garrison troops upon the navy."¹

Equally important was the care which Pericles and the Athenian people as a whole bestowed on the naval establishment. "The fleet" had become, like England's to-day, "the cherished institution of the nation." The Council of the Five Hundred was held responsible for its condition, and that body was awarded no wreath of honor on leaving office in case any neglect was detected in the performance of its duty. Three hundred triremes lay always in time of peace in the dockyards of Piræus, ready at

¹ Curtius, "History of Greece", II, p. 514.

short notice to take the sea with complements of sixty thousand men. Three-score ships were kept continually cruising the Ægean, guarding its coasts and islands against Phœnician raids and Peloponnesian rovers. In the skill and discipline of its crews no navy in Greece could compare with the Athenian. Great numbers of the citizens, says Plutarch, were made to man the ships, one lot of crews frequently relieving another, so that the whole population became accustomed to sea service, voyaging, training, and practicing continually.¹ By this "systematic and laborious training", the Athenians acquired that sea instinct, that superiority of nautical skill, which far more than the mere numbers of their ships gave them the mastery of the sea and victory over the Peloponnesians.

In the Second Peloponnesian War Athens entered the lists almost purely as a naval power. Athens was supreme at sea; Sparta was irresistible on land. Athens could not hope to oppose the Peloponnesian armies in the open field; she must submit to the ravagement of her lands; she must withdraw her population within the shelter of her "long walls" and sustain herself for the most part on imported food. By her fleet, on the other hand, she could inflict equal, if not greater damage on the Peloponnesus, keep open the trade routes of the sea, and maintain her hold on her maritime empire from which she drew a tribute of from six hundred to one thousand

¹ Plutarch, "Cimon", XI. See Appendix G.

talents annually. Sparta had no effective means of assailing this power. She could ravage Attica from end to end, but beyond the fortifications of Athens and the "long walls" she could not go. At sea, Sparta and her confederates could oppose, at the beginning of the war, but one hundred and fifty triremes to the four hundred or more that Athens and her allies could float; in sea training and discipline, too, they were vastly inferior to the Athenians. Nor could these deficiencies be easily or quickly remedied. To build and maintain fleets required, even in the ancient world, large financial resources; and to create an effective sea power, years of practical experience. In both these matters Athens, at the beginning of the war, stood far and away superior to her foes.

Hence arose a peculiar and interesting situation. Neither side was able to get close enough to the other to strike a decisive blow. Only by exhausting the other's resources or by acquiring a superiority on both elements could either hope to win the contest.

Under these conditions the war was waged for the first ten years. Each summer a Peloponnesian army invaded and wasted Attica; while an Athenian fleet sailed south and ravaged the Peloponnesus. So great was the naval superiority of Athens, and so strong the respect which her enemies entertained for it, that no notable conflict took place at sea until the third year of the war, when a juncture of unusual

circumstances, united with the extreme daring of an Athenian admiral, served to bring about an important engagement.

In the summer of 429 B.C., the Athenian admiral Phormio was stationed with a squadron of twenty ships at Naupactus, keeping guard over the entrance to the Corinthian Gulf, on which the bulk of the Peloponnesian naval strength was concentrated. The Peloponnesians, learning of the inadequacy of his force, collected a squadron of forty-seven triremes and sailed down the Gulf from Corinth with the intention of driving past him and reënforcing a land campaign which they were conducting in Acarnania. They had no intention of molesting Phormio, being ill equipped for a naval engagement, but they little dreamed he would dare attack them.

Phormio, however, was determined not to let the enemy reach Acarnania. Allowing the Peloponnesians to sail through the straits into the open water where he would have ample room for maneuvering, he followed their fleet on a roughly parallel course, coasting the northern shore of the Gulf of Patras as the enemy skirted the southern. When the Peloponnesians attempted to cross from Patræ to Acarnania, he bore down upon them in the middle of the Gulf and barred their advance. They were unable to avoid an engagement and formed their fleet for defense in a large unbroken circle, "turning their prows outward and their sterns inward", and placing within the circle their smaller craft and "five of their

swiftest triremes that they might be close at hand and row out at whatever point the Athenians charged them.”¹

Ranging his ships in single line and himself leading the way, Phormio circled with his fleet at high speed round and round the Peloponnesian fleet, which he continually feigned to attack, and thus soon threw it into confusion. His crews were led to suppose each instant that they were on the point of attacking, but they had been carefully instructed by Phormio not to begin until he gave the signal. When the morning land breeze that Phormio had been expecting blew down the Gulf, the disorder in the Peloponnesian fleet grew critical: “their ships, which by this time were crowded into a narrow space, were distressed at once by the force of the wind and the small craft knocking against them; ship dashed against ship, and they kept pushing one another away with long poles; there were cries of ‘keep off’ and noisy abuse, so that nothing could be heard either of the word of command or of the coxswain giving the time; and the difficulty which unpractised rowers had in lifting their oars in a heavy sea made the vessels disobedient to the helm. At that moment Phormio gave the signal; the Athenians, falling upon the enemy, began by sinking one of the admiral’s vessels, and then wherever they went made havoc of them; at last such was the disorder that no one any longer thought of resisting, but the whole fleet

¹ Thucydides, II, 83.

fled away to Patræ and Dymè in Achæa. The Athenians pursued them, captured twelve ships, and taking on board most of their crews, sailed away to Molycreium. They set up a trophy on Rhium, and having there dedicated a ship to Poseidon, retired to Naupactus.”¹

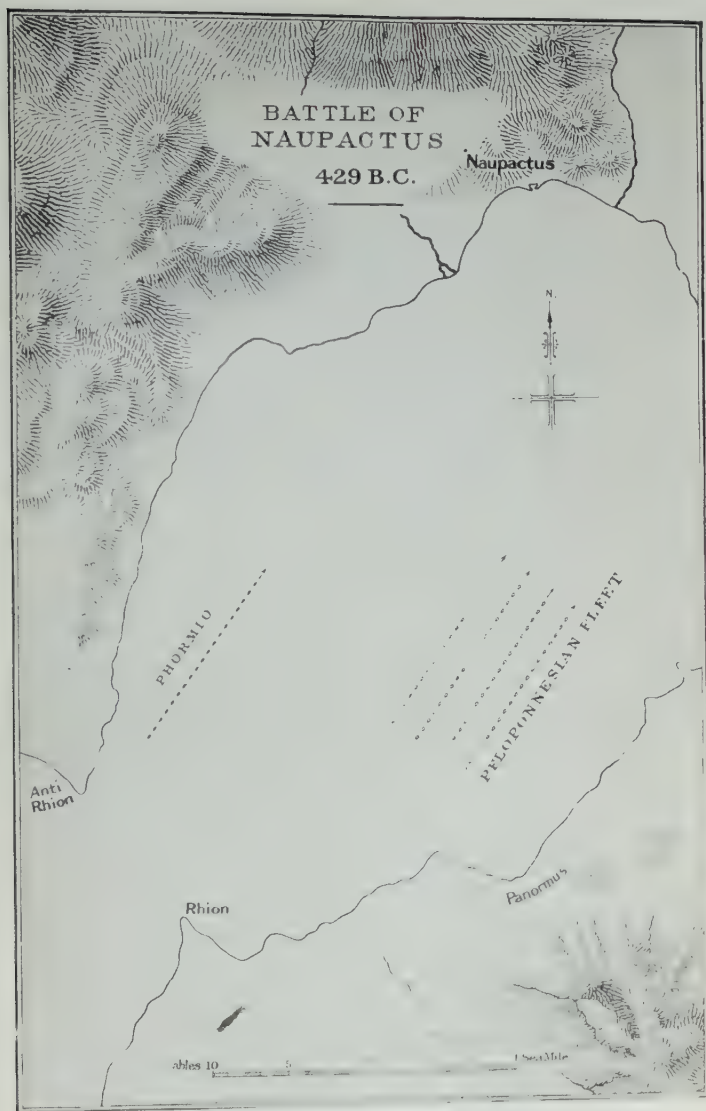
A few weeks later Phormio fought a second battle with his twenty triremes against the Peloponnesian fleet, now raised by reënforcements to seventy-six ships. The Peloponnesians were commanded by a gallant and resourceful Spartan officer, Brasidas,² and they were far better prepared for battle than in the preceding engagement.

“For six or seven days,” says Thucydides, “the two fleets lay opposite one another, and were busy in practising and getting ready for the engagement — the one resolved not to sail into the open sea, fearing a recurrence of their disaster, the other not to sail into the straits, because the confined space was favorable to their enemies.”

When he found that Phormio refused to fight except in the open water, Brasidas had recourse to a clever stratagem. By a skillful feint against Naupactus, which was nearly bare of defenders, he succeeded in alarming his adversary for the safety of that town and in drawing him, “against his will”,

¹ Thucydides, II, 84.

² Though Cnemus was admiral and Brasidas one of three commissioners sent from Sparta to support and advise him, there can be little doubt that the latter able and energetic officer was the real head and leader of the fleet.



PLAN OF THE SECOND BATTLE OF NAUPACTUS, 429 B.C.

From Admiral Sir Reginald Custance's *"War at Sea. Modern Theory and Ancient Practice,"* by permission of the publishers, Wm. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh

within the straits for its defense. Brasidas had ranged his fleet in column formation, four abreast, and weighing anchor early in the morning stood down the middle of the channel toward Naupactus; the Athenians, following on a parallel course, were sailing along in single file close to the land and were well within the narrow waters. Suddenly Brasidas brought his ships around, his whole line facing the Athenians, and bore down upon them with all his force, "every ship rowing at the utmost speed, for they hoped to cut off the whole Athenian fleet." By swift rowing eleven of the twenty Athenian vessels managed to avoid the danger, but the last nine were caught in the onrush of the Peloponnesians, who disabled them, forced them aground, and massacred all the crews who were not able to swim to the shore.

Meanwhile the eleven Athenian triremes which had escaped were being hotly pursued to Naupactus. All but one of them reached the port well in advance of the enemy and took up a defensive position off shore; the eleventh ship, lagging far behind the others, was almost overtaken by a Peloponnesian galley, when, skillfully steering round a merchant hulk anchored at the entrance of the harbor, she rammed the Peloponnesian amidships and sank her. "At this sudden and unexpected feat the Peloponnesians were dismayed"; they had come up in loose order, singing the pæan of victory, but their temper now changed in an instant. Some of their galleys,

not knowing the coast, ran aground; others dropped their oar blades and waited for the rest of the fleet to come up. The delay and hesitation were fatal; the Athenians, seeing what was going on, took heart, and at a given signal rowed out and charged the enemy with a shout. The Peloponnesians "did not long resist, for they had made mistakes and were all in confusion, but fled toward Panormus, whence they had put to sea." The Athenian triremes in turn pursued, took six of the enemy's ships which were nearest them, and also recovered eight out of the nine galleys which they had lost earlier in the day.

The Peloponnesians were completely defeated. Under cover of darkness they sailed through the straits a few days later and scattered to their home cities on the Gulf. A reënforcement of twenty triremes which presently arrived from Athens placed Phormio beyond all danger of attack.¹

I have entered thus fully into the details of these battles because they are the first in history in which we see a system of genuinely scientific naval tactics consciously developed by the commander and intelligently recorded by the historian.² In Salamis and the subsequent battles of the Persian War — so far as the meager accounts indicate — the only tactics employed, besides boarding, were simple frontal attacks in which each captain endeavored

¹ Thucydides, II, 86-91. Diodorus (XII, 48) also mentions these battles, but his account is a bare summary of Thucydides and of no value.

² Thucydides.

“so to steer his ship as to break as much as possible of the enemy’s oarage on the one side, and having thus rendered his opponent’s vessel more or less unmanageable, to ram the weakest part of its structure, the flank, with the beak and stem of his own.”¹

The weaker fleet, as we have seen, in the combats of the Persian War invariably sought a narrow strait or some confined space in which to resist the attack of its superior foe. In the battles of the Corinthian Gulf, however, so confident was Phormio in the swiftness of his ships and his tactical skill that he preferred to meet the enemy in the open water where he could outsail and outmaneuver him. In his maneuver of breaking the enemy’s line in the first battle, Phormio employed the identical tactics by which Jervis won the battle of Cape St. Vincent and Nelson the battles of the Nile and Trafalgar; while Brasidas’ attack from column into line formation in the second battle is one of the most common maneuvers of the English seamen of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

As a naval strategist, Brasidas, as his feint against Naupactus in the second battle indicates, was not a whit inferior to Phormio; and though he had little

¹ See Grundy, “The Great Persian War”, p. 552. In the first combat of Artemisium the maneuver of breaking the enemy’s line (*diêkplus*) was, according to Herodotus (VIII, 9–11) successfully employed by the Greeks; but as Grundy points out (p. 333) it could hardly have been consciously used at that date, and Herodotus may well have been guilty of an anachronism “in attributing that manœuvre to the first quarter of the fifth century.”

or no previous sea experience, he showed himself a tactician of no mean order. Phormio, however, may be truly called the father of naval tactics. He was one of the greatest all-round naval commanders of classical times; an officer "of the old stamp, short of speech, resolute and severe, a model of temperance and blameless life."¹ He was the first of a long line of distinguished naval officers whose principle it is never to decline battle, no matter how great the odds opposed to them; this ideal, Thucydides tells us, he succeeded in instilling in the minds of his men. It was his fortune to possess, or rather his merit to develop, subordinates of the finest mettle and character. Thucydides gives us a picture of his crews advancing to battle in silence and perfect order, only the sharp commands of the boatswains ringing out above the regular sweep and crash of the oars.² With such instruments alone is the exercise of the higher mental faculties possible in warfare; and the forging of such instruments is no less a triumph than victory itself.³

¹ Curtius, "History of Greece", III, p. 94.

² Thucydides, II, 88.

³ Of the later career of Phormio very little is known. A few weeks after his victory over Brasidas, he sailed to Astacus in Acarnania and led an expedition against the cities of that country in alliance with Sparta. "In the following spring (428) he sailed to Athens, taking with him his ships and captives; but such is the vexatious reticence of Grecian historians that, in spite of his brilliant services to his country, we never hear of this officer again; we conclude that he died soon after his return home, or he would certainly have been sent out in the following summer to take command at Naupactus, a post which was given to his son Asopius. Phormio soon became one of the heroes of Athenian story." Abbott, "History of Greece", III, 147.

After the battles of the Corinthian Gulf few important naval events occurred at sea for many years. The fleets of Athens rode supreme on all the seas around Greece and easily frustrated the feeble efforts of her enemies against them.

Several weeks following their defeat off Naupactus the crews of the Peloponnesian fleet crossed the Isthmus of Corinth, and embarking in a fleet of forty galleys from Nisæa projected a daring attack on Piræus. Their courage failed them at the last moment, however; the risk seemed too great, and changing their course, they sailed to Salamis, where they surprised three Athenian guardships, and after ravaging the island, retired with their booty. The Athenians had been guilty of gross negligence and they now took strict measures for the defense of their coast.

In the summer of 427 B.C., Alcidas and Brasidas, with fifty Peloponnesian ships, were sent by Sparta into the Ionian Sea to aid an oligarchical sedition which had arisen in Corcyra against the Athenians. In a battle off the island the Peloponnesian fleet defeated sixty triremes manned by the Corcyrean democrats; but in attempting to capture a squadron of twelve Athenian ships in the same engagement they were beaten off and held at bay until the approach of a superior Athenian fleet forced them to flee.

The next year Athens gained another and yet more important success in the west of Greece. Demosthenes, an Athenian officer who had already

distinguished himself in Ambracia, seized Pylos, a high promontory on the Messenian coast, and converted it with ease into a strong fortress. He was given a small but excellent garrison, and five triremes to defend the place from the sea approach. He did not long hold it unassailed. The Peloponnesian land forces which had begun their usual summer invasion of Attica returned south immediately on hearing of the seizure of Pylos; and a fleet which had been sent to attack Corcyra was also hastily summoned. Demosthenes presently found himself attacked on land and sea, by forces many times his numbers. He repelled all assaults, nevertheless, and valiantly maintained his position until relieved by an Athenian fleet of fifty sail. The admirals in command of this fleet, Eurymedon and Sophocles, immediately began an attack on the Spartan fleet in the harbor of Pylos,¹ a large bay just to the south of the promontory of that name, sheltered from the sea by the off-lying island of Sphacteria. Dividing their fleet into two squadrons and entering the harbor simultaneously through the entrances at either end of Sphacteria, they defeated the enemy in a stubborn combat and eventually got possession of his entire fleet of sixty ships. At the same time they blockaded and soon afterwards compelled the surrender of a select body of Spartan infantry which had been

¹ Pylos is the modern Bay of Navarino where the Turkish-Egyptian fleet was annihilated by the allied English, French, and Russian fleets, October 20, 1827.

landed on Sphacteria before the arrival of the Athenian fleet.¹

Stimulated by these successes, the Athenians prosecuted the war with redoubled energy. They captured with their fleets the islands of Cephallenia, Cythera, and Melos off the Peloponnesian coast, using them as bases, along with Pylos, for inroads on the Peloponnesus and for inciting the rebellion of Sparta's helots. They made formidable and successful descents on the Corinthian and Megarian territories, and constantly ravaged the Peloponnesian coasts. Everywhere at sea they were supreme. The Peloponnesian States, whose sea operations had borne all along the mark of conscious weakness and timidity, now for awhile ceased all attempts to challenge Athenian sea rule. They even abandoned their yearly invasions of Attica and confined themselves to defensive operations on the land. In a word, the Athenians were slowly but surely wearing the enemy out and winning the war, when they were led by the evil genius of Alcibiades into an enterprise whose stupendous folly and whose fatal consequences were destined to inflict on Athens all but utter ruin and hopeless decadency.

SECTION IV. THE SICILIAN EXPEDITION OF ATHENS, 415 B.C. TO 413 B.C.

For many years the Athenians had been throwing ambitious glances westward toward the Greek colo-

¹ Thucydides, IV, 3-40.

nies beyond the Ionian Sea. Between Piræus on the one hand and the Greek cities of Sicily and Lower Italy on the other, a brisk trade had long flourished, which led in turn to relations of a political nature. Pericles had concluded treaties of alliance with the Ionian Greek cities of Sicily in 433 B.C., and six years later the Athenians had intervened with considerable vigor in the factional quarrels that rent the island.

In 415 B.C., at the appeal of the Sicilian city Segesta, Athens determined to send a great land and naval expedition to Sicily. The chief advocate of this step was the popular leader Alcibiades, a brilliant and able but lawless demagogue although an aristocrat, who had long been seeking to use his country as the means for advancing his personal fortunes.

While ostensibly sent to aid Segesta and other Ionian communities of Sicily against the aggression of Dorian Syracuse, the real object of the expedition, in the minds of both Alcibiades and his countrymen, was the extension of the Athenian influence over the Greeks of Italy and Sicily and also possibly over the Phoenicians of Carthage. It was the attempt of a great naval power to acquire an oversea land dominion, by means of which she hoped to vanquish her foes at home. Visions of a vast mercenary force like that of Carthage, of scores of thousands of hirelings overrunning the Peloponnesus and crushing the Spartan power — such were the wild dreams that surged through the brains of the Athenians and were

fanned to madness by the baneful eloquence of Alcibiades.¹

The project was one of the colossal follies of history. The Athenians had all they could do to cope with the Peloponnesians at home, and to divide their strength was to court disaster. Of the size of Sicily or of the power of its cities, they had little knowledge, and they could form no estimate of the magnitude of their undertaking or of the risks involved.

“Moreover, even if they should gain control of Sicily, there was little hope they would be able to retain it. Athens could not become, like Rome, a great conquering power, chiefly for two reasons: first, she was strong only in her navy, and hence must restrict her empire to coasts and islands; and second, the Athenian State was inexpansive, — that is, it rarely bestowed the franchise upon aliens, and consequently never acquired a sufficient number of citizens for supporting an extensive imperial system.”²

With high hopes and buoyant spirit, nevertheless, the Athenians made preparations for their great enterprise. The expedition, when equipped, consisted of nearly three hundred warships, transports,

¹ Thucydides, VI, 6 and 89-92; Plutarch, “Alcibiades”, XVII and “Nicias”, XII. Not all the Athenians by any means fell victims to the Sicilian madness. ~~Nicias~~ Nicias, though compelled to be one of the three commanders of the expedition, was against it from the first, and Socrates, wisest of the Athenians, was said to have been warned by his “divine guide” not to embark in it.

² Botsford, p. 209.

and supply vessels, carrying about thirty five thousand sailors and soldiers.¹ It was commanded by Alcibiades, Nicias, and Lamachus, all three of whom were experienced officers with records of important commands by land and sea. Alcibiades, as later events were to prove, was a great military genius and a great traitor. Lamachus, a daring and able soldier in action, had little political influence or weight in council. Nicias, though an excellent commander for a safe or subsidiary enterprise, was too cautious and irresolute for any great or crucial undertaking; besides, he had little faith in the expedition and had strongly opposed it before the Athenian assembly.

¹ "The great armament," says Thucydides, "consisted of a hundred and thirty-four triremes in all, besides two Rhodian vessels of fifty oars. Of these a hundred were Athenian; sixty being swift vessels, and the remaining forty transports: the rest of the fleet was furnished by the Chians and other allies. The hoplites numbered in all five thousand one hundred, of whom fifteen hundred were Athenians taken from the roll, and seven hundred who served as marines were of the fourth and lowest class of Athenians citizens. The remainder of the hoplites were furnished by the allies, mostly by the subject states; but five hundred came from Argos, besides two hundred and fifty Mantinean and other mercenaries. The archers were in all four hundred and eighty, of whom eighty were Cretans. There were seven hundred Rhodian slingers, a hundred and twenty light-armed Megarians who were exiles, and one horse transport which conveyed thirty horsemen and horses. . . . For the transport of provisions thirty merchant ships, which also conveyed bakers, masons, carpenters, and tools such as are required in sieges, were included in the armament. It was likewise attended by a hundred small vessels; these, as well as the merchant-vessels, were pressed into the service. Other merchant-vessels and lesser craft in great numbers followed of their own accord for purposes of trade." Thucydides (Jowett), VI, 43-44.

While the supply ships, most of the smaller craft, and part of the allied contingents mustered in advance at Corcyra, the main Athenian armament was ready to sail from Piræus in the late spring of 415 B.C.

Few scenes in history have been clothed with the solemn impressiveness, or have been told with the dramatic intensity which the molten words of Thucydides give to the departure of the expedition.

Early in the morning of the day appointed for their departure, the Athenians and such of their allies as had already joined them went down to the Piræus and began to man the ships. The entire population of Athens accompanied them, citizens and strangers alike. The citizens came to take farewell, one of an acquaintance, another of a kinsman, another of a son; the crowd as they passed along were full of hope and full of tears; hope of conquering Sicily, tears because they doubted whether they would ever see their friends again, when they thought of the long voyage on which they were sending them. At the moment of parting the danger was nearer; and terrors which had never occurred to them when they were voting the expedition now entered into their souls. Nevertheless their spirits revived at the sight of the armament in all its strength and of the abundant provision which they had made. . . .

No armament so magnificent or costly had ever been sent out by any single Hellenic power. . . . On the fleet the greatest pains and expense had been lavished by the trierarchs and the state. The public treasury gave a drachma a day to each sailor, and furnished empty hulls for sixty swift sailing vessels, and for forty transports

carrying hoplites. All these were manned with the best crews which could be obtained. The trierarchs, besides the pay given by the state, added something more out of their own means to the wages of the upper ranks of rowers and of the petty officers. The figure-heads and other fittings provided by them were of the most costly description. Everyone strove to the utmost that his own ship might excel both in beauty and swiftness. The infantry had been well selected and the lists carefully made up. There was the keenest rivalry among the soldiers in the matter of arms and personal equipment. And while at home the Athenians were thus competing with one another in the performance of their several duties, to the rest of Hellas the expedition seemed to be a grand display of their power and greatness, rather than a preparation for war. . . . Men were quite amazed at the boldness of the scheme and the magnificence of the spectacle, which were everywhere spoken of, no less than at the great disproportion of the force when compared with that of the enemy against whom it was intended. Never had a greater expedition been sent to a foreign land ; never was there an enterprise in which the hope of future success seemed to be better justified by actual power.

When the ships were manned and everything required for the voyage had been placed on board, silence was proclaimed by the sound of the trumpet, and all with one voice before setting sail offered up the customary prayers ; these were recited, not in each ship, but by a single herald, the whole fleet accompanying him. On every deck both officers and men, mingling wine in bowls, made libations from vessels of gold and silver. The multitude of citizens and other well-wishers who were looking on from the land

joined in the prayer. The crews raised the Pæan, and when the libations were completed put to sea. After sailing out for some distance in single file, the ships raced with one another as far as Ægina; thence they hastened onwards to Corcyra, where the allies who formed the rest of the armament were assembling.¹

From Corcyra the great fleet stood in three divisions across the Ionian Sea to the promontory of Iapygia and Tarentum, each ship taking its own course, and passed down the coast of Italy. The Greek cities of Lower Italy refused to admit the Athenians within their walls or open a market for them, but allowed them to anchor in their harbors and take on water. At length they reached Rhegium at the tip of Italy, where the fleet reunited. The galleys were there drawn up on shore outside the walls and the crews supplied with provisions by the Rhegians.

After a period of rest for the men and prolonged councils by the commanders, the expedition steered across to Naxos and Catana in Sicily, both of which cities admitted them and became the main bases of supply and operation for the fleet.

Scarcely had the Athenians commenced operations against their objective, Syracuse, when Alcibiades, one of the three commanders of the fleet, was recalled to Athens to answer charges brought against him by his political foes. Fearing for his life should he return home, he escaped from his ship at Thurii,

¹Thucydides (Jowett), VI, 30-32.

and thence made his way to Sparta, where he imparted to the Peloponnesians information and advice of the most valuable nature.

The recall of Alcibiades left the main command of the fleet in the hands of Nicias, who, as stated, had opposed the expedition from the first and was not disposed to prosecute it vigorously. Instead of immediately attacking Syracuse when the city was unprepared to resist, as Lamachus urged, Nicias let the summer and fall pass in profitless undertakings off the coast; and finally, though defeating the Syracusans in a land battle outside their walls, withdrew with the armament to Catana late in the fall.¹

After a winter spent by Nicias in seeking allies in Sicily and in appealing to Athens for reinforcements and supplies, the expedition, in the spring of 414 B.C., sailed into the Great Harbor of Syracuse² and laid siege to the city. The Syracusans in the meantime, however, had made the most of their respite, strengthened their walls, reorganized their army, and sent envoys to Greece to beg aid of Sparta and Corinth.

¹ Thucydides, VI, 46-72.

The Sicilian expedition falls for the most part under the head of military rather than of naval history. For a complete account, therefore, I must refer the reader to the matchless narrative of Thucydides, confining myself to the part which sea power plays in its course and outcome.

² "Syracuse had two harbors, the Lesser Harbor, on the north of the island of Ortygia (the site of the most ancient part of the city); and the Great Harbor, on the south. The latter was a spacious bay of about five miles in circumference. Its entrance, between Ortygia and the headland of Plemmyrium, was about twelve hundred yards wide." — B. Perrin's note to his translation of Plutarch's "Nicias."



PLAN OF THE HARBORS OF SYRACUSE

*From Jane's "Heresies of Sea Power," by permission of the publishers,
Longmans, Green & Co., New York and London*

Much bloody and obstinate fighting now followed on land, which lasted for the space of a year, in which the advantage rested mainly with the Athenians. There was even talk among the Syracusans of surrender. The tide was at length turned by the arrival of the Spartan general Gylippus, who with a force of three thousand men succeeded in piercing the besiegers' lines and entering Syracuse. The Athenians were soon afterwards decisively repulsed, forced to abandon their walls of circumvallation, and retire to their entrenched camp near the edge of the harbor.

Worse than this, they were presently assailed by the Syracusans on the sea. The latter already possessed a considerable fleet which was now strengthened by the arrival of Corinthian and other Peloponnesian vessels that succeeded in eluding the Athenian blockade. Under the direction of Gylippus, the Syracusans now began hastily to build new ships and to practice assiduously with the old, at rowing in the Lesser Harbor.

The Athenian navy, on the other hand, had deteriorated both in *matériel* and *personnel*. The ships, during their long stay in foreign waters without adequate docking facilities, had become leaky and rotten. The crews also had declined both in numbers and efficiency. Many had been killed in land battle; many had deserted, their places being filled with slaves; and the successes of the enemy, together with the difficulty in obtaining supplies, had served

to inoculate all with a sense of weariness and discouragement. From the Lesser Harbor meanwhile, the Syracusans, supplied with everything, eager, high-spirited, patriotic, might sally out at pleasure, forcing the Athenians to stand continually on their guard.¹

The first naval attack of the Syracusans took place early in the spring of 413 B.C. Issuing forth in two squadrons of thirty-five and of forty-five ships from their fortified anchorage² in the Great Harbor and from the Lesser Harbor, around opposite sides of the Isle of Ortygia, they endeavored to wrest from the Athenians control of the Great Harbor. The latter responded by launching twenty-five ships to meet the enemy in the Great Harbor and thirty-five to hold its entrance. The Syracusans were successful at first in both engagements. The smaller squadron in the Great Harbor pushed the Athenians back to their anchorage, while the larger squadron, after a stubborn combat, succeeded in forcing its way through the entrance. But as the ships crowded into the port, they fell into disorder and began running foul of one another. The Athenians seized their opportunity, and charging about, sank or captured eleven Syracusan vessels and drove the rest, including the ships of the smaller squadron, back into the Lesser Harbor. They had lost three of their

¹ Thucydides, VII, 12.

² This consisted of an arc of palisades or piles which the Syracusans had driven into the harbor bottom around their docks on the city's water front, and behind which their galleys could ride secure.

own ships, however, and their confidence was badly shaken.¹

Nothing daunted by this reverse, the Syracusans soon renewed the struggle. Profiting by their experience, they made several important changes in the construction of their galleys, cutting down and strengthening the bows and making the projecting beams at the prows much thicker. The object of these changes was to make the vessels superior at close quarters to the galleys of the Athenians, which, being lightly built, were devised specially for swift and expert maneuvering in the open and were not intended for prow-to-prow encounters in such comparatively close quarters as the Great Harbor.²

The Syracusans were right in their calculations. In a series of engagements lasting over two days, the Athenians were borne down by the superior weight of the enemy's vessels; they were forced to accept defeat and retire within the fortified line of their anchorage. The Syracusans had become unquestionably superior at sea.³

A reënforcement of seventy-three triremes from

¹ Thucydides, VII, 21-24. As an offset to this victory the Athenians lost at the same time to the Syracusans by land attack the fortress of Plemmyrium at the entrance of the Great Harbor, opposite Ortygia and Syracuse. Here the Athenians had deposited supplies and property of all sorts, including the sails and fittings of forty triremes.

² See Appendix C.

³ Thucydides, VII, 36-41. Even before their victory the Syracusans had sent out secretly twelve triremes which sailed to Italy, and after destroying a fleet of Athenian supply ships, had conveyed a body of Peloponnesian hoplites to Sicily.

Athens under Demosthenes and Eurymedon restored the balance for a time in favor of the Athenians, but the Syracusans were not to be checked in the tide of their success. They "were now quite confident that they were not only equal but superior to the Athenians in sea-fighting." After exercising with their ships for several weeks in the Lesser Harbor, they again put out to battle — this time with seventy-six triremes. The Athenians launched eighty-six ships to meet these, but were quickly and decisively defeated. Part of their right wing under Eurymedon was surrounded and destroyed, and with the loss of eighteen vessels they were forced to retire within their anchorage.¹

The Syracusans now sailed freely about the Great Harbor, and began blocking up the entrance, about two thirds of a mile broad, by means of merchant hulks, disabled triremes, and small boats chained broadside in rows. They sought thus to prevent the escape of their enemy and compel the surrender of his whole force.

"They meantime made every preparation for a naval engagement, should the Athenians be willing to hazard another; for all their thoughts were on a grand scale."²

"The Athenians, seeing the closing of the harbor and inferring the intentions of the enemy", resolved on a last desperate attempt to regain the sea. Their entire army, with the exception of a division left to

¹ Thucydides, VII, 42, 52.

² Thucydides, VII, 56, 59.

guard the sick and baggage in the camp, embarked on the fleet; they intended to fight a land battle at sea, so to speak, and to win by sheer force of numbers.

Launching forth in one hundred and ten triremes — all their available ships — they made for the mouth of the harbor and tried to force a way through the narrow passage still left open. The violence of their onset at first overpowered the Syracusan guard ships; but while trying to loose the obstructions to make a wider channel, they were attacked by the enemy in full force. The battle soon became general throughout the harbor.

No previous engagement, says Thucydides, had been so fierce and obstinate. Great was the eagerness with which the rowers on both sides rushed upon their enemies whenever the word of command was given; and keen was the contest between the pilots as they maneuvered one against another. The marines too were full of anxiety that, when ship struck ship, the service on deck should not fall short of the rest; every one in the place assigned to him was eager to be foremost among his fellows. Many vessels meeting — and never did so many fight in so small a space, for the two fleets together amounted to nearly two hundred — they were seldom able to strike in the regular manner, because they had no opportunity of first retiring or breaking the line; they generally fouled one another as ship dashed against ship in the hurry of flight or pursuit. All the time that another vessel was bearing down, the men on deck poured showers of javelins and arrows and stones upon the enemy; and

when the two closed, the marines fought hand to hand and endeavored to board. In many places, owing to the want of room, they who had struck another found that they were struck themselves: often two or even more vessels were unavoidably entangled about one, and the pilots had to make plans of attack and defence, not against one adversary only, but against several coming from different sides. The crash of so many ships dashing against one another took away the wits of the sailors, and made it impossible to hear the boatswains, whose voices in both fleets rose high, as they gave directions to the rowers, or cheered them on in the excitement of the struggle. On the Athenian side they were shouting to their men that they must force a passage and seize the opportunity now or never of returning in safety to their native land. To the Syracusans and their allies was represented the glory of preventing the escape of their enemies, and of a victory by which every man would exalt the honor of his own city.

While the naval engagement hung in the balance the two armies on shore had great trial and conflict of soul. The Sicilian soldier was animated by the hope of increasing the glory which he had already won, while the invader was tormented by the fear that his fortunes might sink lower still. The last chance of the Athenians lay in their ships, and their anxiety was dreadful. The fortune of the battle varied; and it was not possible that the spectators on the shore should all receive the same impression of it. Being quite close and having different points of view, they would some of them see their own ships victorious; their courage would then revive and they would earnestly call upon the gods not to take from them their



BATTLE IN THE GREAT HARBOR OF SYRACUSE

*From Hartwell's "Sea Kings and Naval Heroes," by permission of the
publishers, Henry Allen Company, Philadelphia*

hope of deliverance. But others, who saw their ships worsted, cried and shrieked aloud, and were by the sight alone more utterly unnerved than the defeated combatants themselves. Others again, who had fixed their gaze on some part of the struggle which was undecided, were in a state of excitement still more terrible; they kept swaying their bodies to and fro in an agony of hope and fear as the stubborn conflict went on and on; for at every instant they were all but saved or all but lost. And while the strife hung in the balance you might hear in the Athenian army at once lamentation, shouting, cries of victory or defeat, and all the various sounds which are wrung from a great host in extremity of danger. Not less agonizing were the feelings of those on board. At length the Syracusans and their allies, after a protracted struggle, put the Athenians to flight, and triumphantly bearing down upon them, and encouraging one another with loud cries and exhortations, drove them to land. Then that part of the navy which had not been taken in the deep water fell back in confusion to the shore, and the crews rushed out of the ships into the camp. And the land forces, no longer now divided in feeling, but uttering one universal groan of intolerable anguish, ran, some of them to save the ships, others to defend what remained of the wall; but the greater number began to look to themselves and their own safety.¹

The ruin of the Athenians was complete. For though they still had more ships fit for service than the enemy,² their morale was utterly broken. Their

¹ Thucydides, VII, 70-71.

² "The Athenian fleet still numbered sixty, but the enemy had less than fifty galleys." Thucydides, VII, 72.

leaders, Nicias and Demosthenes,¹ who almost alone retained courage amid universal despair, proposed that they should man the remaining triremes and force their way to sea at daybreak the next morning. But the disheartened crews refused to embark or face the enemy any more. There was nothing to do but burn the ships and try to escape by land. Of that horrible retreat, of the butchery of a large part of the Athenian force, of the capture of the survivors and the terrible fate meted out to them, I may not here speak. It is sufficient to state that as a result of her mad folly and ambition, Athens lost nearly sixty thousand men and more than two hundred ships of war. "Fleet and army perished from the face of the earth." Only a few stragglers from the great expedition ever regained their native shores.²

SECTION V. DECLINE AND FALL OF THE
ATHENIAN SEA EMPIRE, 413 B.C. TO 404 B.C.

The ruin of her armament in Sicily spelled unmistakably the doom of Athens' empire in Greece. The flower of her youth had perished; her treasury was exhausted; two thirds of her fleet were destroyed; her allies were seething with rebellion.

¹ Lamachus had fallen in a skirmish outside the walls of Syracuse. Eurymedon had perished in the second naval combat in the Great Harbor.

² Thucydides, VII, 72-87. The narrative of the Sicilian expedition occupies the entire sixth and seventh books of Thucydides. The short summary of Diodorus is of little value.

Everywhere enemies rose against her, not only her ancient foes, the Peloponnesians, but neutral States, who, expecting her immediate downfall, hastened to share in the triumph of the victors. Sparta made strenuous efforts to control the sea, levying contributions on the members of the Peloponnesian League, and with the money thus obtained beginning the construction of a hundred triremes.¹ Naval aid was secured from Sicily and financial assistance from Persia. The latter country had for more than thirty years been kept in a state of innocuous passivity by fear of the Athenian fleet; she now judged the time for action had arrived. Between the Great King and Sparta an alliance was concluded, whereby, in exchange for the right to tax and oppress the Greek cities of Asia Minor, Persia agreed to furnish funds for a war against Athens until the latter was utterly crushed.²

That the Athenians in their weakened condition could struggle for nine years against the combined strength of Greece, supported by Persian money, is, in truth, one of the miracles of history. After the first paroxysm of despair, the citizens had resolved to resist to the last, and with marvelous buoyancy set about devising means of defense. Money was procured by a special tax; rigid economies were instituted; new triremes were laid down; and a careful watch was kept on the allies. To the surprise and dismay of her enemies, Athens took the

¹ Thucydides, VIII, 3.

² Thucydides, VIII, 18, 37, 58.

sea in the spring of 412 B.C. with a powerful fleet, prepared to fight for the mastery of the sea.¹

The ensuing naval campaigns of 412–405 B.C. were struggles mainly for the Athenian empire in the *Ægean* and the *Hellespont*. Seldom has such tremendous activity been shown in sea history. Chios, supported by Sparta and Persia, revolted from Athens in the summer of 412 B.C., and her example was followed speedily by Lesbos, Rhodes, Teos, and other *Ægean* communities. By heroic efforts Athens managed to retain her hold on Samos, which she made the basis of her naval operations, and to recover Teos and Lesbos. She also presently recalled Alcibiades, whom she had driven to treason in 415 B.C., and who now, as commander in chief of her forces, strove to repair the harm he had done his country by leading her into the Sicilian expedition.

Fortune for a time again smiled on the Athenians. A Peloponnesian squadron, after effecting the revolt of Byzantium from Athens, precipitated a lively struggle for the control of the Bosphorus and the Hellespont. For the defense of those regions Alcibiades dispatched a powerful squadron from Samos. The hostile fleets met off Cynossema, just inside the entrance of the Hellespont, seventy-six Athenian ships against eighty-eight Peloponnesian. The center of the Athenian line gave way, and the Peloponnesians were on the point of a decisive victory, when their fleet fell into confusion, allowing the

¹ Thucydides, VIII, 1, 4.



ALCIBIADES

From an Engraving



Athenian left under Thrasybulus to deliver a crushing flank attack and redeem the day. The Athenians took twenty-one ships but lost fifteen of their own. A few days later they also captured eight more vessels which had become separated from the main Peloponnesian fleet.¹

This triumph, which caused the greatest rejoicing at Athens, was soon followed by a still more solid success. A Spartan reënforcement from Rhodes was intercepted by the Athenians off the mouth of the Hellespont; and though the Peloponnesians sailed forth from Abydos with their entire fleet, they were driven back with the loss of more than thirty ships. The victory was largely due to the arrival of Alcibiades at the critical moment with a fresh division of eighteen ships.²

Under that leader the Athenians a month later sailed against the enemy's fleet at Cyzicus on the Propontis, whither it had retired after its late defeat. Alcibiades by skillful maneuvering got between the Peloponnesians and their base, and then by a vigorous, well-concerted attack forced them to run ashore on the open coast. There, after a hard-fought battle, the Peloponnesians were totally defeated. Sixty of their ships were captured, the rest were burned; most of the crews escaped ashore. "Ships gone, our admiral dead, men starving, at

¹ Thucydides, VIII, 99-107.

² Plutarch, "Alcibiades", XXVIII; Xenophon, "Hellenica", I, 1; Diodorus, XIII, 45, 46.

our wits' end what to do" was the laconic dispatch that was sent to Sparta from the survivors of Cyzicus.¹

Sparta thereupon offered peace on the basis of *status quo*, which the Athenians fatuously declined. They had scored an immense victory and now reaped its fruits. Byzantium and other cities of the Bosphorus and the Propontis were reconquered, and the Athenians were able to replenish their war chest by imposing heavy indemnities on the revolted communities. But unfortunately their resources were limited and precarious, while those of the Peloponnesians were steady and inexhaustible. Supported by the money of Persia, the latter could build fleets almost as fast as the Athenians could destroy them.

Unfortunately, too, the Athenians were unable to put full trust in Alcibiades. He had led them into disaster, he had played the traitor; but he was now repentant and was fighting valiantly and effectively for them. During his absence from Samos with a part of the fleet, his subordinate Antiochus, against his orders, risked a battle with a superior enemy squadron and was defeated off Ephesus with the loss of fifteen ships. Alcibiades, on his return to Samos, offered battle with his entire fleet, but the Peloponnesians prudently declined to fight. The Athenians blamed Alcibiades for the reverse of

¹ Plutarch, "Alcibiades", XXVIII; Xenophon, "Hellenica", I, 1; Diodorus, XIII, 49-51.

Antiochus, and failed to reëlect him admiral the following year. Fearing for his life, he thereupon retired to a castle on the Hellespont, which he had prepared for such an occasion, leaving his countrymen to their fate.¹

The Athenians, however, were destined to one more great triumph before the day of their downfall. The Peloponnesians had rapidly replaced their fleet after Cyzicus, and in 406 B.C. were ready to renew the struggle. Under Callicratidas,² a brave but inexperienced admiral, they commenced a campaign against the Athenians in the north Ægean. Cruising with a great fleet of a hundred and seventy vessels, Callicratidas surprised an Athenian squadron of seventy sail under Conon, took thirty of his ships, and forced the rest to take refuge in the harbor of Mytilene. Great was the alarm of the Athenians when they heard of Conon's plight. By immense exertions they managed to collect one hundred and fifty triremes with which they sailed against Callicratidas. The latter, leaving fifty ships under Eteonicus to blockade Conon in Mytilene, opposed them with one hundred and twenty ships. The two fleets met off

¹ Xenophon, "Hellenica", I, 6; Plutarch, "Alcibiades", XXXV and XXXVI.

² Callicratidas was one of the noblest characters in Greek naval history. Strongly opposed by the partisans of Lysander upon taking his command, he disarmed them by his perfect patriotism, bravery, and modesty. He detested the alliance of Persians against Greeks, and declared that if he ever got back home he would do what he could to reconcile the Athenians and the Lacedæmonians. His untimely end was a blow to Greece and to civilization.

the Arginusæ Isles near the Asiatic coast opposite Lesbos.

The battle which followed was the greatest fought in the course of the war. For Athens it was a decisive battle; if she was defeated the war was at an end; she had ventured her last stake. The Athenians had the advantage in numbers, but their fleet had been hastily prepared, and was managed by inexperienced sailors; they were conscious that it was incapable of the skillful manœuvres for which they had long been famous. It was drawn up in two massive wings, each of sixty vessels; the center, which apparently lay on the islands of Arginusæ, was formed by a single line. . . . The Peloponnesians were drawn up in a single line; they were old sailors and wished to take whatever advantage of their skill they could.

The pilot of Callicratidas, observing the disparity of numbers, advised him to decline battle, to which he replied that he was by no means a necessary man at Sparta, and it would be disgraceful to retreat. The battle was hotly contested, but when Callicratidas, who commanded the right, was hurled into the sea by the force of his impact on the enemy's ship and drowned, and the left was defeated by Protomachus, the whole fleet turned to flight, some to Chios but most to Phocæa. The Athenians returned to Arginusæ. They had lost twenty-five vessels and their crews, but in the Peloponnesian fleet at least seventy ships had been destroyed, including nine ships out of ten in the Lacedæmonian contingent. The victory was complete and at once restored Athens to the control of the Ægean.¹

¹ Abbott, "History of Greece", III, 443-444. For the ancient authorities see Xenophon, "Hellenica", I, 6; Diodorus, XIII, 14.

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Great as was the triumph of the Athenians, it would have been well for their fame had they lost the battle. For they presently disgraced their victory by one of the foulest judicial murders known in naval history. After the battle, while the admirals sailed with the bulk of the fleet to free Conon in Mytilene, two ship captains, Theramenes and Thrasybulus, had been ordered to take forty-seven triremes and rescue the sailors from the galleys disabled in the fight; but a violent storm had arisen and hindered them from accomplishing their duty. Great was the indignation in Athens when the loss of the crews became known. Theramenes and Thrasybulus, fearing the people's wrath, artfully managed to shift the blame on the shoulders of their superiors, who were deposed from office and summoned home. The admirals, who obeyed, six in number, were cited before the popular assembly, and after a trial in which the most unfair and illegal methods were resorted to, they were condemned to death. The Athenians, it is but just to state, soon repented of their action, and turned upon the guilty captains.

Vengeance for this terrible deed was soon to fall on the Athenian people themselves. Sparta, following Arginusæ, had again offered terms on the basis of *status quo* but the Athenians had again refused to accept them.¹ Yet they made no attempt to follow up their victory, keeping their fleet inactive at Samos

¹ Aristotle, "Constitution of Athens", 34.

for many months. The Peloponnesians, on the other hand, were busily engaged in building and fitting out a new fleet in Antandrus. To command it Lysander was sent from Sparta early in 405 B.C. He had already served as admiral, having defeated the Athenians in the action which resulted in the disgrace of Alcibiades. As the laws of Sparta forbade a man being twice appointed to the office of admiral, he came as admiral's secretary, with the understanding that he was to be the real commander. After spending the winter months in augmenting and organizing his forces, he sailed in the middle of the summer for the Hellespont, for the purpose of intercepting Athens' grain supply which was drawn mainly from the Euxine. For the defense of that vital interest Conon was dispatched with one hundred and eighty Athenian triremes.¹

Lysander had taken his station with two hundred ships at Lampsacus near the entrance of the Propontis. Conon, ascending the Hellespont, anchored his fleet off Ægospotami, two miles opposite his foe, on the European shore of the strait. For five successive days Conon sailed forth and offered battle. Lysander refused to engage, but waited at his station with his crews on board and his triremes ready for action, and each day sent out a squadron of swift ships to watch the movements of the Athenians as they returned to their base. He learned

¹ Xenophon, "Hellenica", II, 1; Diodorus, XIII, 100-104; Plutarch, "Lysander", VII-IX.

that they were becoming increasingly contemptuous of the enemy, and were wandering farther and farther from their ships each day as they landed in quest of supplies.¹ On the fifth day, after the Athenians had retired as usual to Ægospotami, Lysander, upon a signal from his scout ships, stood across the Hellespont with his entire fleet. The Athenian crews had beached their ships and disembarked, and were scattering in foraging parties, according to their habit, far and wide over the country. They returned hastily when they saw the enemy coming, but before they could half man the ships the Peloponnesians were upon them. No surprise could have been more complete or decisive. "The triremes were caught at their moorings ashore, some entirely deserted, others with one or at the most two tiers of rowers which formed their complement." Conon with his flagship and eight other vessels including the official Athenian dispatch boat *Paralus* managed to escape; all the rest, after a brave resistance, fell into Lysander's hands, who sullied his triumph by massacring three thousand Athenian prisoners. (September, 405 B.C.).²

¹ Alcibiades, whose castle of refuge was close at hand, observed the dangerous situation of the Athenians, and riding up to their camp at the head of a troop, he begged them to remove their base to Sestos, two miles down the strait, where they could obtain abundant supplies and where they would probably also have the support of Thracian land forces. This wise counsel, however, was rejected, and Alcibiades was insolently dismissed.

² Xenophon, "Hellenica", II, 1; Plutarch, "Lysander", IX-XIII; also his "Alcibiades", XXXVI-XXXVII; Diodorus, XIII, 104-106; Grote, VIII, p. 9.

"It was night," says Xenophon, "when the *Paralus* reached Athens with her evil tidings, on the receipt of which a bitter wail of woe broke forth. From Piræus, following the line of the 'long walls' up to the heart of the city, it swept and swelled, as each man passed the news to his neighbor. On that night no man slept. There was mourning and sorrow for those who were lost, but the lamentation for the dead was merged in even deeper sorrow for themselves, as they pictured the evils they were about to suffer, the like of which they had inflicted upon the men of Melos," Histæa, Ægina, and many others.¹

Athens had shot her last bolt; her ships and crews were gone; she was soon besieged by land and sea. Yet in this dire extremity her citizens still held out: they filled up the mouths of their harbors and guarded their walls day and night. Not till famine had made deep ravages in their ranks did they sue for peace. A Peloponnesian congress was thereupon held in Sparta, wherein delegates from Corinth, Thebes and other Greek cities were in favor of blotting out Athens utterly and enslaving her citizens.

But the Spartan rulers interposed with milder terms; they were unwilling, they said, to reduce to bondage a people who had rendered such mighty services to Greece at the time of the Persian invasion. Let Athens demolish her "long walls" and the fortifications of Piræus; let her surrender all her war-

¹ Xenophon, "Hellenica", II, 2.

ships but twelve, and follow Sparta's lead by land and sea — on these conditions she might retain her autonomy and her city walls.

There was nothing for the Athenians but to submit; and while still weak from inanition, they mournfully watched the entrance of Lysander into the Piræus and the destruction of the "long walls" by the Peloponnesians, who celebrated with the music of flutes "the return of liberty to Greece." (April 16th, 404 B.C.)¹

SECTION VI. LATER GREEK NAVAL HISTORY, 404 B.C. TO 146 B.C.

With the battle of Ægospotami the grand epoch of Greek naval history comes to a close. Henceforth the militant efforts of the people, whether in their own or in foreign affairs, are largely confined to the land. Naval warfare, which from the Persian invasion to the end of the Peloponnesian wars, plays the decisive rôle in Greek history, from now on assumes a distinctly and increasingly secondary part.

For ten years after the surrender of Athens, Sparta ruled supreme by land and sea. But her overlordship was far more oppressive and tyrannical than Athens' had ever been: the tide of discontent rose steadily against her; and in 394 B.C. a general rising of the Greek States took place. Persia, fearing the

¹ Xenophon, "Hellenica", II, 2; Diodorus, XIII, 106-107; Plutarch, "Lysander", XIII and XIV.

Spartan power and wishing to maintain the balance among the Greeks, turned against her ally. Under Conon,¹ a combined Greek and Phœnician fleet in Persian service met the Spartans off Cnidus, and all but annihilated them. The Spartan sea empire, which had been built up by Persian money, now by the same means fell almost at a blow. Conon sailed from island to island in the Ægean, expelling the Peloponnesian garrisons and setting up free governments in their stead. He crowned his work by conducting the fleet to Athens and aiding his countrymen in rebuilding the "long walls" and the fortifications of Piræus. Athens was again to count as a power in Greece and on the sea.²

With the end of the short-lived Spartan sea supremacy Athens again rose to the position of leading, though by no means dominant, Greek naval power.³ She soon again possessed a formidable fleet and was cheered by the tidings of naval victories. During the Corinthian War (395-387 B.C.), her navy took an important part and enabled her to secure exceptionally favorable terms at its close. She had recovered Byzantium and the greater part of her dominion on the Hellespont; she had reëstablished her influence

¹ After Ægospotami, Conon fled to Cyprus and took refuge with Evagoras, Prince of that island.

² Xenophon, "Hellenica", III, 4; IV, 1-8; Diodorus, XIV, 39, 79-85; Plutarch, "Agesilaus", X; Nepos, "Conon", IV.

³ Her sea power in the fourth century, however, was feeble compared with her sea power in the fifth. For instance, in 373 B.C., the Athenians with great difficulty manned seventy war vessels for an expedition to relieve their ally Corcyra. Xenophon, "Hellenica", VI, 2.

over Lesbos and her ancient possessions of Lemnos, Imbros, and Sycros. Furthermore, in 378 B.C. :

The maritime cities of the Ægean, which since the battle of Cnidus had been looking to Athens for protection, now renewed their alliance with her. The new league was to be a union of the Greeks for the defense of their liberties against Sparta. Each allied state sent a deputy to a congress at Athens. It was agreed that the leading city alone should have no representative in this body in order that the deputies might not be influenced by the presidency or even the presence of an Athenian. A measure to be binding on the league must receive the approval of both Athens and the congress. This arrangement made the leading city equal to all the others combined, but prevented her from acquiring absolute power such as she had exercised over the members of the earlier league. . . . There were to be contributions of ships and money as before, but since the leading city was no longer in a position to compel the allies to perform their duties, the league remained far weaker than it had been in the preceding century.¹

The semblance of power which Athens had thus regained lasted for nearly forty years. During the war of Athens and Thebes against Sparta (379–371 B.C.), and during the subsequent Theban land supremacy, the fleet of Athens and her allies dominated the Ægean and revived the naval glories of Cyzicus and Arginusæ. A great and well-ordered attempt on the part of Thebes to obtain sea supremacy was frustrated by the death of her great leader Epaminondas.

¹ Botsford, p. 271.

This second maritime empire of Athens reached its height about 360 B.C. It included the greater part of the Ægean islands, Byzantium, the region of the Hellespont, Corcyra, Cephallenia, Acarnania, and the seaboard towns of Thrace. But with the extension of her power her allies again came to regard her with jealousy and suspicion. She had no legal right to coerce them, and her attempts to enforce contributions only increased their disaffection. This culminated in 358 B.C. in the secession of Chios, Cos, Rhodes, and Byzantium, followed in the course of a few years by the majority of her other allies. After futile and exhausting efforts to reconquer them, Athens ended by recognizing their complete independence. She still managed to retain Eubœa and a few small islands in the Ægean, from which she drew a tribute of forty-five talents annually.

Her power, her military spirit, her political ambition were fast declining. Her citizens showed an increasing dislike of foreign service; her fleets and her armies were largely filled by foreign mercenaries. Though she continued for some years the first naval power of Greece, she made no effective resistance to the aggressions of Philip of Macedon, and was forced to conclude an inglorious peace with him, which virtually robbed her, along with the rest of Greece, of independence. During Alexander's invasion of Asia she remained a spectator, but after his death turned against his successors. Reduced to submission by Antipater, she again became the vassal

of Macedon; and though she possessed well into the third century a considerable navy, it was mainly employed in the service of the foreigner.¹ Her position of commercial supremacy in the Ægean had already been taken by Rhodes, whose fleet played an important part in the foreign wars of Rome in the second and first centuries, B.C.

¹NOTE ON THE NAVAL POLICIES OF PHILIP II OF MACEDON AND ALEXANDER THE GREAT. Facing on the northwestern round of the Ægean Sea, and possessing little or no commerce, Macedon, like Rome, had remained for centuries a purely land power, fighting to maintain herself against her Illyrian and Pæonian neighbors to the west and north, or to extend her sway over them. But when, in 359 B.C., King Philip II ascended the throne, the country under his able guidance began to divert some of her energies to the sea. Educated in Thebes, where he had passed his youth as a hostage, Philip, we may believe, had been a keen and admiring student of Athenian naval history and institutions. Though he would have preferred to make Athens his ally and friend, he was destined to spend much of his life's energies in combating the Athenian sea power.

The first two years of Philip's reign were spent in seating himself firmly in power. Domestic enemies were quelled; the army was reorganized on a new model; and the Illyrians and Pæonians were crushingly defeated. Philip then began to push his power eastward along the coast of Thrace to the Hellespont and southward to the Pass of Thermopylæ. By a mixture of force and duplicity, he gained possession of the great seaport of Amphipolis, a revolted Athenian colony, and other Thracian and Chalcidian cities in alliance with Athens. These conquests, while arousing the enmity of Athens, secured for him free access to the sea, an extended coast line, and the possession of vast gold mines in the Thracian Mount Pangæus, whose revenues made him the wealthiest ruler in Greece. He had won the necessary base and the means for becoming a great power by land and sea. He was already looking forward to an assault on the Persian Empire.

In 352 B.C., Philip had begun the creation of a navy, which he soon put to use. "His marauding vessels, let loose in the northern Ægean, captured the corn ships of Athens, descended on her possessions and dependencies — Lemnos, Imbros, and Eubœa — and once even insulted

the coast of Attica itself." (Bury, "History of Greece", II, 282.) He was still too weak to contend with the war fleet of Athens in open battle; but he stirred up revolt in her great colony, Eubœa, and while Athens was endeavoring to recover it he destroyed the sole remaining independent city-state on the north Ægean seaboard, Olynthus. Athens, exhausted financially and weakened by the revolt of her allies in the Social War, was compelled to make peace with him (346 B.C.).

Philip, while extending and consolidating his power on land, continued in the next few years to increase and improve his navy. This policy was induced by the attitude of the Athenians, who, swayed by the eloquence of Demosthenes, were at heart hostile to Philip and sought by covert means to thwart his plans. War, in fact, was resumed between the two powers in 340 B.C., as a result of Athenian provocations.

There were two ways by which Philip could attack Athens, the great opponent of his ambitions: first, by a direct attack on land through Attica itself; second, by wresting from Athens control of the Hellespont and shutting off her vital Black Sea commerce. The first would likely result in a combination of the States of central Greece against him; the second, as the event proved, was impracticable without naval superiority. Yet, as the possession of the Hellespont was essential to the launching of his prospective expedition against Persia, his first attack was made in that region.

Athens, however, was still the great naval power of the Ægean. The naval reforms of Demosthenes had increased her fleet to over three hundred galleys. Her possession of the Chersonese (Gallipoli peninsula) gave her control of the entrance to the Black Sea regions and the great corn trade that issued from them. Fear of Philip drew numerous allies around Athens and even induced the revolt of some of his own tributaries and allies, such as Byzantium. The Macedonian navy, therefore, while inflicting some damage on Athenian commerce, was unable to strike a blow for the control of the sea; Philip's land forces, lacking the essential coöperation of a superior navy, were baffled in their attempt to conquer the difficult regions of the Hellespont and the Propontis and had to withdraw.

Philip was now forced to employ the direct method of land attack against Athens, through Attica itself. At the head of a great host he advanced through the Pass of Thermopylæ and appeared in Bœotia. Athens and Thebes combined against him but were totally defeated in the battle of Chæroneia. As a result Macedon at once attained to the hegemony of Greece, and Philip was presently elected captain-general of the forces of the Greek States for a war against Persia.

His ambitions, however, were cut short by assassination, and his son Alexander the Great succeeded to his power (336 B.C.).

When that monarch, two years later, started on his career of grandiose conquest, he possessed one hundred and sixty Macedonian warships, none larger than triremes and many of them probably of a lower rating. The Persian navy of four hundred galleys controlled the seaboard of Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. Alexander, it is true, might have levied an overwhelming sea force from Athens and other maritime States of Greece, now tributary to him; but knowing their latent disaffection, he refrained, either through motives of prudence or pride, from extorting unwilling assistance.

The Macedonian fleet, however, successfully transported Alexander's army across the Hellespont, and after the victory of the Granicus materially aided in the siege and capture of Miletus. But the powerful Persian navy was now mobilized and active; Alexander, who could be prudent as well as daring when the occasion demanded, judged it advisable not to engage with it. Instead of calling upon Athens and Greece for naval aid or of building up a strong fleet of his own, he decided from a survey of the whole situation that the Persian sea power would have to be conquered from the land. His one hundred and sixty galleys were too few to cope with the four hundred of the enemy, manned by skilled Phœnician and Cyprian seamen, and to maintain his ships in service would merely be a useless drain on his treasury. Accordingly, he sent home and disbanded most of his fleet, "and proceeded to blockade the sea by seizing all the strong places on the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean. The execution of this design occupied him for the next two years, but it brought with it the conquest of Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt." (Bury, II, 346.)

While Alexander was subjugating those countries, the Persian fleet, ably commanded by the Rhodian mercenary Memnon, reduced Chios, Tenedos, the greater part of Lesbos, and gave considerable embarrassment to the Macedonian operations. A hundred Persian warships even sailed as far west in the Ægean as the island of Siphnos off the Peloponnesus, and entered into negotiations with King Agis of Sparta to induce the Greeks to revolt. The news of the overwhelming victory of Alexander over Darius at Issus, however, effectually quenched these plans.

As a result of Issus, Alexander was enabled to march into Syria and to strike at the seat of the Persian naval might in the Phœnician cities. Byblus, Sidon, Aradus sent in their submission to the conqueror, and Tyre, the main base of the Phœnician sea power, was besieged.

There is the clearest historical evidence to show that Alexander's chief motive and reason for making the expedition into Syria, following his victory at Issus, instead of adopting the more obvious strategy of pursuing vanquished Darius into the heart of Persia, was his realization of the importance of overcoming the enemy's supremacy on the sea. In a council of war called to consider the advisability of undertaking the siege of Tyre, after the refusal of the Tyrian ambassadors to admit him within their walls, Alexander thus addressed his officers:

"Friends and allies, I see that an expedition to Egypt will not be safe for us, so long as the Persians retain the sovereignty of the sea; nor is it a safe course, both for other reasons, and especially looking at the state of matters in Greece, for us to pursue Darius, leaving in our rear the city of Tyre itself in doubtful allegiance, and Egypt and Cyprus in the occupation of the Persians. I am apprehensive lest while we advance with our forces towards Babylon and in pursuit of Darius, the Persians should again forsooth conquer the maritime districts, and transfer the war into Greece with a larger army, considering that the Lacedæmonians are now waging war against us without disguise, and the city of Athens is restrained for the present rather by fear than by any good-will towards us. But if Tyre were captured, the whole of Phœnicia would be in our possession, and the fleet of the Phœnicians, which is the most numerous and the best in the Persian navy, would in all probability come over to us. For the Phœnician sailors and marines will not dare to put to sea in order to incur danger on behalf of others, when their own cities are occupied by us. After this, Cyprus will either yield to us without delay, or will be captured with ease at the mere arrival of a naval force; and then navigating the sea with the ships from Macedonia in conjunction with those of the Phœnicians, Cyprus also having come over to us, we shall acquire the absolute sovereignty of the sea, and at the same time an expedition into Egypt will become an easy matter for us. After we have brought Egypt into subjection, no anxiety about Greece and our own land will any longer remain, and we shall be able to undertake the expedition to Babylon with safety in regard to affairs at home, and at the same time with greater reputation, in consequence of having appropriated to ourselves all the maritime provinces of the Persians and all the land this side of the Euphrates." (Arrian, "*Anabasis of Alexander*", II, 17.)

Before the siege of Tyre had progressed far, Alexander found it necessary to cope with the enemy on the latter's own element, the sea. Tyrian triremes issued from the insular city's havens, thwarted the efforts of the Macedonians to build a mole across from the mainland to the

island, and made evident the hopelessness of taking the city without an effective sea control. Fortunately for Alexander, the materials of a great naval power were now ready to his hand. Aradus, Byblus, and Sidon, which had submitted to him, had recalled their squadrons from the Persian command in the *Ægean*, leaving it a weak and ineffective force. Alexander himself repaired to Sidon, and soon collected a fleet of about two hundred and fifty warships: besides some Macedonian galleys, eighty vessels were supplied to him by Sidon, Aradus, and Byblus; ten triremes came to him from Rhodes, three from Cilicia, and ten from Lycia; and presently the princes of Cyprus, following the example of their mainland Phœnician kinsmen, brought him the services of one hundred and twenty triremes. Personally commanding this great fleet, Alexander sailed down the coast and forced the Tyrian galleys to take refuge within their harbors. The Macedonians, protected and aided by their warships, quickly completed the mole across from the mainland to Tyre. A desperate sortie of the Persian fleet was defeated; breaches were made in the city's walls; and in a grand assault by fleet and army Tyre was overwhelmed and taken.

The Perso-Phœnician naval power was now a thing of the past, and Alexander was master of the *Ægean* and Levantine seas. The rest of Syria and then Egypt quickly submitted to him, and with the support of a mighty sea power and secure communications with Macedon, Alexander was able to start in August, 330 B.C., on his career of Asiatic conquest, which was to stop only at the eastern limits of the Punjab and the banks of the river Hyphasis.

Henceforth the story of Alexander lies almost wholly outside the domain of naval history. However, it is certain that the conqueror never lost spiritual sight of the sea or of sea power. His stubborn though fruitless effort to lead his wearied followers farther with him into India was made in the desire of navigating that great "eastern ocean" into which the waters of the Ganges flows and which, in the false light of the geographical science of the age, he believed was the eastern boundary of the earth. Likewise, on his return from India, he built a fleet on the Indus and sailed down that river to its outlet into the "southern ocean" (Arabian Sea), whence he sent his admiral Nearchus to discover a new trade route between India and the West through the Persian Gulf. The last months of his life were occupied with plans for vast maritime enterprises. A fleet was launched on the Caspian to explore its unknown waters and to discover its supposed communication with the ocean. Another and greater fleet was assembled at Babylon on the Euphrates and was destined by Alexander to sail round the great peninsula of Arabia

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE: Herodotus and Thucydides are the great authorities for the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars, respectively. The history of Thucydides, ending abruptly with the year 410 B.C., is continued by Xenophon in his "Hellenica" which, though flowing and vivid in its narrative, is distinctly inferior to Thucydides both in reliability and in style. Valuable supplementary and corroborative information is supplied by the "Historical Library" of Diodorus, by Æschylus's drama, "The Persians", and by Plutarch's Lives of Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, Pericles, Nicias, Alcibiades, Lysander, Agesilaus, and Alexander. Arrian's "Anabasis of

to the head of the Red Sea. The "southern ocean" was to be explored and to be made into "another great commercial sea like the Mediterranean." The seaboard and the islands of the Persian Gulf were to be colonized by seamen from the Syrian coast and transformed into a second and greater Phœnicia. Alexander "hoped to establish a regular trade route from the Indus to the Tigris and Euphrates, and thence to the canals which connected the Nile with the Red Sea." (Bury, II, p. 419.) Babylon was chosen as the capital of his empire, but it was to be a great naval and commercial port, with wharves, dockyards, ship sheds, and a vast artificial harbor capable of holding a thousand vessels. Such were the visions that surged through the brain of Alexander — visions which, we may believe, he would have translated into wonderful realities — when the hand of death struck down the dreamer and shattered though not wholly destroyed his dreams.

The States which were formed from the fragments of Alexander's empire followed for the most part strong naval policies and maintained large fleets. Egypt under the Ptolemies formed a powerful navy for the defense of the Nile region and was famed for her huge and many-banked galleys, which we shall see later in action at Actium. Macedon, gorged with the wealth of Asiatic conquest and controlling the still large though decadent Athenian fleet, possessed an imposing sea force for some time after Alexander's death. Syria, and later Pergamus and Pontus, entered the race for sea power and dominion. The island republic of Rhodes succeeded Athens as the commercial entrepôt of the Ægean, and developed probably the most efficient fighting force in the Levant. With the alliance of Rhodes, as we shall see, Rome was able to sweep from the sea the Macedonian and Asiatic navies and to establish her supremacy over the eastern Mediterranean and the Euxine.

Alexander" is the chief ancient authority for the career of Alexander the Great.

I have consulted the standard modern detailed histories of Grote, Curtius, Duruy, Holm, and Bury, and the excellent compendium of Professor George Willis Botsford of Harvard University. For a full list of the works consulted see the main bibliography.

PART TWO: ROME

In (nautical) skill the Romans are much behind the Carthaginians, as I have already said; yet the upshot of the whole naval war has been a decided triumph for the Romans, owing to the valour of their men. . . . The fact is that Italians as a nation are by nature superior to the Phœnicians and Libyans both in physical strength and courage.

POLYBIUS.

SECTION I. SICILY AND CARTHAGE TO THE FIRST PUNIC WAR, 264 B.C.

While the eastern Greeks were triumphantly resisting Persian aggression in the Ægean as well as fighting disastrously among themselves, another conflict was proceeding in the central Mediterranean between the Greek colonists of Sicily and the Phœnicians of Carthage. This contest, one of the most obstinate and protracted in history, forms the prelude of the First Punic War, the great naval duel between Carthage and Rome, on whose issue the destinies of both those imperial nations hung.

I have already spoken briefly of the Phœnicians in their native Syria, of their racial character, their commercial and colonial achievements, and their influence on the sea history of Greece. Exposed to the full sweep of oriental land conquest, they were unable to form a free and strong nation on the Syrian

littoral but were forced to serve as naval auxiliaries of the great eastern empires, while at the same time busily engaged in trading, colonizing, and extending the bounds of the known world by their maritime explorations.

A nobler though a tragic destiny awaited these seamen in their westward voyaging, where foreign influence no longer shackled them. Fated to become the greatest of widespread Phœnician colonies, Carthage was founded by citizens of Phœnician Tyre, near the site of modern Tunis early in the ninth century B.C. The central, strategic location of the city and her excellent harbor soon gave her a position of dominance over the Phœnician settlements of the North African coast. As Tyre and Sidon declined in the east, Carthage rose in the west. The Carthaginians inherited and transmitted in full measure the Phœnician propensity for a seafaring life and commercial adventure; but partly from the infusion of new blood, partly from the force of circumstances, they early acquired a character of marked divergence from that of their parent race. From a peace-loving, trading people, they developed into a proud, warlike, conquering nation aspiring to the rule of the Mediterranean. Threatened on all sides by foes — by the hostile native tribes of Africa, by the Etruscans to the north, and by the everpressing westward tide of Greek migration — they had been forced by sheer self-preservation to adopt a strong military policy. This they had done

by the creation of a great mercenary force, whereby the wealth of the nation was converted into the "sinews of war." In their navy — with which we are chiefly concerned — "the officers and sailors were mostly native Carthaginians, while the rowers were mainly slaves bred or bought for that purpose."¹

The military power of the Carthaginians, created originally for defense, was soon employed for purposes of aggression. They extended their power rapidly; and by the close of the sixth century controlled the northern shores of Africa from Cyrenaica westward, important Phœnician settlements on the southern and Atlantic coasts of Spain, the Balearic Isles, Corsica, Sardinia, Elba, Malta, and the western end of Sicily.

The island of Sicily was at once the goal and the stumbling-block of their ambition. There they were met by a race more warlike by nature, though less thrifty and united than their own. The Greek immigrants who had begun to throng into Sicily as far back as the eighth century B.C. were among the most vigorous and ambitious of their race. Like the Phœnicians, they saw in Sicily the fairest and richest island in the Mediterranean and the dominating commercial position of that sea. They too were resolved to possess it at all costs.

Down to the middle of the sixth century, the Greeks had got the better of the race struggle for Sicily. They had pushed their foes back to the ex-

¹ Rawlinson, "Manual of Ancient History", p. 78.

treme western tip of the island, where the Phœnicians clung obstinately to a few positions of great natural strength. At the same time Greek merchants began incursions into the seas to the west of Sicily, which the Phœnicians had hitherto regarded as their own, and into which foreign sailors were warned by threat of death from venturing.

Coincident with the advance of the Greeks in Sicily occurred the phenomenal growth of the Punic power. As their strength increased the Carthaginians gave more and more assistance to their Phœnician kinsmen in Sicily. About 550 B.C. a Carthaginian king named Malchus invaded the island and reconquered considerable portions of territory from the Greeks. From this time forward a conflict, varying between periods of intense fury and lulls of comparative peacefulness, raged for nearly three centuries. Seven times during these centuries the Carthaginians invaded Sicily on a grand scale. Six times they overran the greater part of the island; five times they were driven back to the western extremity; on one occasion the Greeks carried the war into Africa.

In these contests naval power played an important if not a decisive part. The Carthaginians were generally superior at sea, and were able to throw large armies, nearly at will, into Sicily. The Greeks were continually, and at times successfully, challenging this superiority. They were as skillful sailors and far better sea fighters than the Carthaginians,

who relied for victory chiefly on the overwhelming numbers of their ships. On more than one occasion they defeated vastly superior Punic fleets and temporarily controlled the sea.

The most ambitious attempt of the Sicilian Greeks at sea power was made under Dionysius I, Tyrant of Syracuse. The naval prestige of Athens had for nearly seventy years held in check the Carthaginians in the western, as well as the Persians in the eastern Mediterranean;¹ but a few years after Athens' Sicilian disaster, the Carthaginians again invaded Sicily in great force. They drove the Syracusan navy from the sea with their powerful squadrons, and quickly overran the island. Dionysius was forced to buy peace in 405 B.C. by ceding the greater part of Sicily.

He immediately planned revenge. For seven years he busied himself with great military and naval preparations. He increased his war fleet to over three hundred vessels. He built for the first time quadriremes and quinqueremes — huge galleys with four and five banks of oars, respectively — invented for him by his shipwrights, which from now on began to supersede the trireme as the battleship of antiquity.² With his vast armament he began war in 397 B.C., and almost swept the Carthaginians from the island. The next year, however, they defeated him in a desperate sea fight off Catana, and drove

¹ Thucydides, VI, 34.

² Diodorus, XIV, 42.

him back on land inside the walls of his capital. The Carthaginians then sailed into the Great Harbor of Syracuse and besieged that city. They were upon the point of taking it when they were assailed by a destructive pestilence that demoralized both fleet and army. The Syracusans took heart, and sallying out of the Inner Harbor defeated the enemy in a partial fleet action. They soon afterward succeeded in setting fire to the main Punic fleet of over two thousand warships and transports in the Great Harbor, the awful spectacle of whose burning was watched by the Syracusan population from the walls of the city. The Carthaginians in despair abandoned the siege and retired to the western end of the island.

In the hundred years which passed between the death of Dionysius and the beginning of the First Punic War, the affairs of Greek Sicily suffered a slow but fatal decline. Wars between cities, wars within cities, revolts of mercenaries spent the people's strength and made them an easy prey for the foreigner. The Carthaginians came in increasing numbers, but though Timoleon and later Pyrrhus checked and drove them back, the Greeks were too weak and too divided to expel them permanently. To do that, naval power was essential; but the Greeks, after Dionysius, made no determined effort at sea control. After the death of Agathocles, who gained glory but little advantage by carrying the war into Africa, the independent power of the Greeks in Sicily dwindled to almost nothing. The largest and

fairest portion of the island was controlled by the Carthaginians; the eastern coast regions were divided between Syracuse and the Mamertines, a body of Campanian mercenaries who, having revolted from Syracuse, had seized on Messana and established themselves there as an independent power. Syracuse and the Mamertines were continually at war with each other, and the Carthaginians supported first one side, then the other.

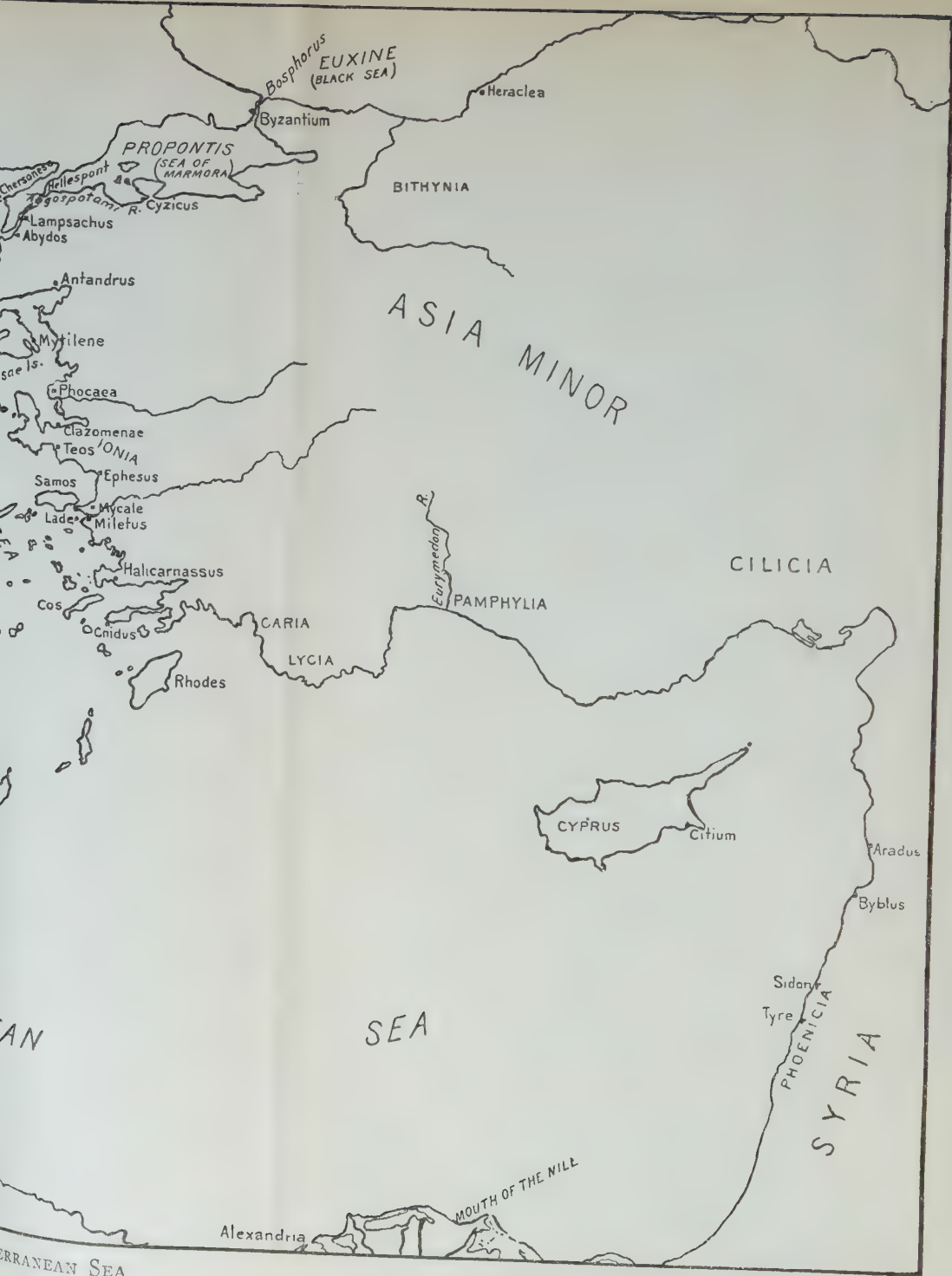
Such was the political and military situation of the island when a new combatant entered the lists, and snatching the sword from the failing hands of the Greeks, contested with Carthage the supremacy of Sicily and the western Mediterranean. This was Rome.

SECTION II. THE FIRST PUNIC WAR, 264 B.C. TO 242 B.C.

A glance at the maps of Italy and Greece will show why the Romans, unlike the Greeks, were primarily a land-loving and military rather than a seafaring and sea-fighting people. The coast line of Italy is broken by few indentations and flanked by few islands. The geography of the peninsula repelled rather than drew its inhabitants to a seafaring life. The Romans never truly loved the sea, and their greatest deeds were performed on the land. The heartfelt wish expressed by one of Antony's veterans at Actium that while the Egyptians and Phœnicians might fight in "wooden bottoms", he



MAP OF THE E.



might be allowed to stand on the solid earth to which he was accustomed,¹ expressed the instinctive attitude of the Roman mind. "The ambition of the Romans," says Gibbon, "was confined to the land; nor was that warlike people ever actuated by the enterprising spirit which had prompted the navigators of Tyre, of Carthage, and even of Marseilles, to enlarge the bounds of the world and to explore the remote coasts of the ocean. To the Romans the ocean remained an object of terror rather than of curiosity."²

For the same reason, the truly marvelous exploits of the Romans on the sea have been overshadowed by their military history; "amid the trampling of the legions the dip of the oar-blade has not been heard." With the sole exception of Polybius, a Greek, the ancient historians of Rome have given but scant notice to the story of her sea power.

Prior to her struggle with Carthage, the power of Rome was confined almost solely to the Italian mainland. Her marvelous conquests from the banks of the Tiber, northward to Cis-Alpine Gaul and southward to the Straits of Messana, had been made, so far as is known, without help worth mentioning from a fleet of war. For nearly a century the Republic had possessed a small merchant marine and even a few warships of an inferior class; but her naval strength before the First Punic War was as

¹ Plutarch, "Antony", LXIV.

² Gibbon, "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire", ed. Bury, I, 17.

inconsiderable compared with that of Carthage as was the fleet of the German Empire in 1871 compared with that of Great Britain. The few ships she maintained had been employed solely for the defense of her coasts and commerce against piracy. The vaunt of Hanno the Carthaginian at the outbreak of the First Punic War that he would not permit the Romans so much as to wash their hands in the sea seemed, in view of the relative sea powers of the two States, hardly a vain or empty boast.

With the conquest of Italy, which Rome substantially achieved by her victory over Pyrrhus in 275 B.C., a change came over her foreign policy. From a purely peninsular State she emerged a great Mediterranean power. Her debut as such was recognized by a treaty of friendship and commerce which Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt the following year proffered and concluded with the Republic. Rome had come to realize her strength, to conceive large imperialistic ambitions, and dimly to foresee her mighty destiny. Her military classes were eager for the wealth and reputation which foreign conquests would bring; her merchants were desirous of a larger share in the trade of the Mediterranean. But whichever way they looked they were blocked by the power of Carthage. The Punic naval power confined and threatened their territory on three sides; it could at will exclude their commerce from the Mediterranean. By the terms of ancient treaties with Carthage, Roman commerce had been shut out

completely from Corsica and Sardinia, from Spain, and from the African coast west of Carthage; but if such restrictions had not been felt during the nation's infancy, they became unbearable when it attained a vigorous manhood. As early as the beginning of the third century, Rome had begun to look on Carthage with eyes of enmity and distrust. The two nations combined for a few years to fight the common enemy, Pyrrhus; but after the latter's defeat they soon found themselves face to face, no longer allies and friends, but bitter rivals and foes.

The initial conflict between Rome and Carthage, the First Punic War, was a war primarily for the possession of Sicily. Carthage, as we have seen, controlled the better part of that island and seemed likely soon to possess the whole. That would mean the extinction of the independent Greek power in Sicily and the undisputed Carthaginian domination of the western Mediterranean. Such an eventuality not only spelled ruin to Rome's foreign aspirations, but even threatened her hold on southern Italy. To forestall its happening, Rome entered upon the first of her great wars with Carthage — a struggle "which lasted for nearly a quarter of a century, and became noteworthy in the history of the world for the enormous resources of the combatants, for the extraordinary exertions made by both alike, and for the momentous nature of its results."¹

The immediate occasion of this conflict was the

¹ Shuckburgh, "History of Rome", p. 219.

quarrel between Syracuse and the Mamertine freebooters. In Syracuse a successful leader, Hiero, had arisen, defeating the Mamertines in battle and shutting them up inside the walls of Messana. In their extremity the Mamertines looked abroad for help. One faction among them appealed to Carthage, another sent an embassy to Rome. The Carthaginians, who were nearest at hand, lent a force to garrison the city. This act, far more than the appeal of the Mamertines, determined the action of Rome and her decisive step. For the Romans to cross the Straits of Messana was to embark on a career of extra-Italian conquest, to war with the greatest naval power of the Mediterranean. But if national prudence and caution questioned its advisability, national ambition and policy urged its adoption. Either Rome or Carthage must control Messana, but if Carthage controlled it, it was a long step toward the possession of Sicily. The Roman people, therefore, to whom the Senate submitted the question, voted that aid should be sent to the Mamertines. Appius Claudius, one of the consuls for the year 264 B.C., was appointed to command the expedition.

In crossing into Sicily, the Romans at first had no idea of fighting Carthage on the sea; with their insignificant navy such an attempt seemed preposterous. It was proposed by the best means available to throw an army into Sicily, where the legions, once landed, would have no trouble in dealing with

the enemy and driving him back to his ancient limits. But even for this hopeful scheme some naval support was necessary. Transports were needed to convey the army across the straits, and warships, if possible, to protect it from the Punic squadrons. The Romans, however, had no warships of the first class and few of any kind at all. The best they could do was to borrow or hire a few triremes and penteconters ¹ from the allied Greek cities of lower Italy — Tarentum, Locri, Elea, and Neapolis; by the aid of which and by great good fortune their army was ferried across to Sicily at night, without serious damage from the Carthaginian fleet.

In Sicily, as expected, the Roman success was rapid and brilliant. The Carthaginian garrison was expelled from Messana; the Syracusan and Carthaginian armies were routed outside its walls on two successive days. Soon afterwards Hiero, who had become king of Syracuse, made a separate peace with the Romans, and he ever afterwards remained their faithful ally. The Romans, sweeping across the island, defeated the Carthaginians in a second battle and captured their great stronghold Agrigentum. By these successes Roman superiority was established on land and the Punic power confined to a few strongholds on the western and northern coasts.

¹ Polybius (I, 20) speaks of triremes and quinqueremes; but as he has just said that no State in Italy had employed quinqueremes up to that time, I take it that he has misspoken himself. This is evidently the view of Arnold in his history, pp. 565-566; also of Clark, "Influence of Sea Power on Roman Republic", p. 12.

It soon became evident, however, that if the Carthaginians were to be entirely driven from Sicily, Rome must command by sea as well as by land. Even across the narrow Straits of Messina, of which she now controlled both sides, her communications were uncertain and precarious; and while Carthage's home territory was free from attack, the Italian and Sicilian seaboards were continually exposed to the ravages of the Punic squadrons.

To overcome these disadvantages and meet the enemy on his own element, the Romans determined to become a naval power. How great was their daring in this resolve is seen from the fact that they not only possessed no first-rate warships, having never before seriously thought of sea dominion, but they were even ignorant of how to build them. An almost purely land people, they were setting out to challenge the greatest naval power in the world, which for centuries had held almost undisputed sway over the western Mediterranean.

Fortunately for the Romans, a Punic quinquereme, which had stranded near Rhegium, fell into their hands. With this as a model, they at once set to work to build a hundred more like it. The slopes of Latium and Campania furnished abundant timber, and the Greek cities of Lower Italy supplied shipwrights. While the ships were under construction, crews were hastily collected and trained, huge rowing platforms being erected on the shore whereon the men were exercised in movements of rowing and in

keeping time with the boatswain's call. At the end of sixty days the ships, with their timbers still green from the forests, were completed and launched; and after a short preliminary practice in real sea rowing the fleet started on its voyage down the coast of Italy. (Spring of 260 B.C.) ¹

The Romans' first naval encounter was disastrous. The consul, G. Cornelius Scipio, who had been appointed to command the fleet, sailed in advance with a squadron of seventeen ships to Messina, whence he proceeded to the Lipari Isles, with the intention of seizing that group as a base for his fleet. While anchored off Lipara he was suddenly attacked by twenty Punic quinqueremes which the Carthaginian admiral Hannibal, having received secret intelligence of his arrival, had dispatched against him. The raw Roman crews ran their vessels ashore at sight of the enemy and fled, leaving their squadron and commander to the Carthaginians.

Better fortune met the main Roman fleet. Hannibal, hearing of its approach, sailed northward with fifty ships, after his success at Lipara, to reconnoiter. While carelessly rounding the "Italian Headland" ² he fell in unexpectedly with the Roman fleet, which, proceeding in perfect order, surprised and captured

¹ Florus, II, 2; Pliny, "Historia Naturalis", XVI, 192; Polybius, II, 20, 21.

² This promontory, says Shuckburgh, was probably the promontory below Hippo, *C. Vaticano*, "which might to the Sicilians be the promontory of Italy." Shuckburgh, p. 243.

more than half his vessels. Hannibal himself escaped by a seeming miracle.¹

The Romans, arriving with their prizes the next day at Messina, learned of the capture of Scipio and his squadron. They at once notified the second consul, Duilius, who had been assigned to the army in Sicily, but who, on hearing of his colleague's loss, hastened to Messina to take over the fleet.

The Romans, as a result of these encounters, had learned lessons of the greatest value and profit. They were conscious of their deficiencies as seamen, of their inferiority to the enemy in naval tactics.

They did not understand, as the Carthaginians did, how to manœuvre a vessel so as to bring her beak crashing into an enemy's broadside; how to dash through the enemy's line, and turning rapidly to charge stern or side; how to sweep away his oars by a swift rush past, or practise other feats which required great command over the vessel and long and laborious training. They therefore determined on another method of fighting, which, however rough and unscientific, would make the victory depend on the fighting men on deck, of whose superiority to the enemy they felt confident. The object of the contrivance was to enable these men to board an enemy's vessel and fight as though on land. To effect this they constructed a wooden gangway or boarding bridge on each vessel, swinging round a pole fixed in the prow. Its extremity was elevated by a rope which ran through a pulley at the top of the pole, and had on its lower side a sharp iron spike. The machine was so arranged that it could be swung

¹ Polybius, II, 21.

backwards and forwards, according to the direction of the enemy's ship. The plan was to run as close to the enemy as possible and to swing round the boarding bridge till its end could drop upon his deck. The two ships would thus be grappled together. If they were close alongside, the Roman soldiers would leap on board; or if the spike dropped on the enemy's prow or stern, they would board by means of the gangway two abreast, resting their shield on the railing which ran along each side of the gangway. The machines were called *corvi* or "crows."¹

By the time these preparations were complete Duilius had arrived at Messina. Hearing that the enemy's fleet was ravaging the coast near Mylæ, he at once sailed forth with his whole fleet to attack it.

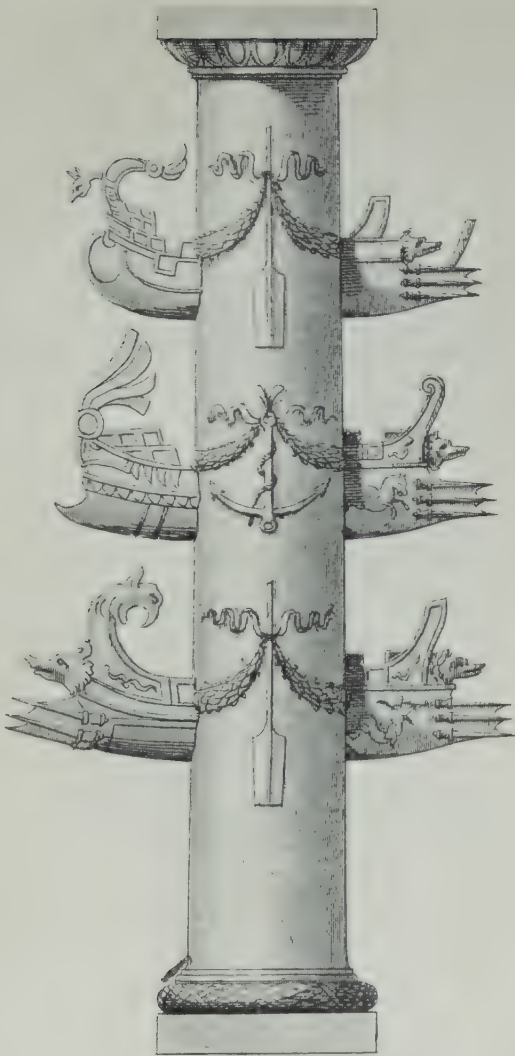
No sooner did the Carthaginians sight him than with joy and alacrity they put to sea with one hundred and thirty sail, feeling supreme contempt for the Roman ignorance of seamanship. They all sailed with their prows directed straight at the enemy, not even taking the trouble to range their ships in any order, but advancing as though to seize a booty exposed for their acceptance. Their commander was that same Hannibal who had withdrawn his forces from Agrigentum by a swift night movement, and he was on a galley with seven banks of oars which had once belonged to King Pyrrhus. When they neared the Romans and saw the "crows" raised aloft on the prows of the several ships, the Carthaginians were for a time in a state of perplexity, for they were quite strangers to such contrivances as these engines. Feel-

¹ Shuckburgh, p. 243.

ing, however, a complete contempt for their opponents, those on board the ships that were in the van of the squadron charged without flinching. But as soon as they came to close quarters their ships were invariably tightly grappled by these machines; the Romans boarded by means of the "crows", and engaged them on their decks; and in the end some of the Carthaginians were cut down, while others surrendered in bewildered terror at the battle in which they found themselves engaged, which eventually became exactly like a land fight. The result was that they lost the first thirty ships engaged, crews and all. Among them was captured the commander's ship also, though Hannibal himself by an unexpected piece of luck and an act of great daring effected his escape in the ship's boat. The rest of the Carthaginian squadron were sailing up with the view of charging; but as they were coming near they saw what happened to the ships which were sailing in the front, and accordingly sheered off and avoided the blows of the engines. Yet trusting to their speed, they managed by a manœuvre to sail round and charge the Romans, some on their broadside and others on their stern, expecting by that method to avoid danger. But the engines swung round to meet them in every direction and dropped down upon them so infallibly that no ships could come to close quarters without being grappled. Eventually the Carthaginians turned and fled, bewildered at the novelty of the occurrence, and with the loss of fifty ships.¹

The battle of Mylæ which Polybius thus describes is one of the most important in sea annals. It was the Romans' first great naval victory, their first

¹ Polybius, I, 23.



THE ROSTRAL COLUMN OF DUILIUS

From an Engraving

real naval battle.¹ By their ingenious mechanical contrivance, the "crow", they had been able to overcome the Carthaginian tactical superiority and to win on an element on which they had practically no previous experience. Though far from gaining at once control of the sea, they had leaped at a bound to the place of a great naval power, on a plane of unquestionable parity with Carthage. Whatever disasters might befall them in the future, it was now certain that they would never permanently abandon the water. Armed with the prestige of victory, they were in a position to contest the supremacy of the sea and to conduct the war on land with immensely greater energy and results.

Great and justifiable was the enthusiasm which this victory, so far beyond expectations, aroused at Rome. A permanent commemorative monument, the *columna rostrata*, adorned with the bronze beaks of the captured Punic vessels, was erected in the Roman Forum. The victorious commander Duilius became the hero of the hour. Honors unprecedented were bestowed upon him. He was given the first *triumphis navalis*, and awarded the privilege for life of returning from public banquets preceded by a torchbearer and musicians.²

The immediate effect of Mylæ for Rome was greatly to enlarge the theater of her operations.

¹ Both of the previous encounters partook rather of the nature of accidents than of battles.

² Livy, "Epitome", XVII; Cicero, "De Senectute", XIII; Valerius Maximus, III, 6.

The Romans, while pressing the enemy more closely in Sicily and checking his raids on their own coasts, undertook a series of operations against the other outlying Punic possessions and even against Africa itself. The year after Mylæ (259 B.C.), the consul Lucius Scipio conducted an expedition against Corsica, capturing the chief town Aleria and expelling the Carthaginians from the country. From Corsica he sailed to Sardinia, but though he defeated the enemy in a naval engagement he was not strong enough to reduce the island. The next year Gaius Sulpicius sailed over to Africa and, after destroying a hostile squadron, made several successful descents on the coast.

These and other successes led the Romans to a still more bold and ambitious project — nothing less than a home thrust at Carthage by a regular invasion of Africa. To support and to oppose this undertaking, the respective belligerents made immense efforts to increase their fleets — the Romans, to cover the crossing of their army to Africa, the Carthaginians, if possible to destroy it at sea.

In the spring of 256 B.C. the Roman preparations were complete; three hundred and thirty quinqueremes and a squadron of horse transports rode at anchor in Messana harbor. Putting to sea, the expedition bore due south, and after doubling Cape Pachynus at the southeast angle of Sicily, sailed westward to the mouth of the river Himera. There, under the shadow of Ecnomus Mountain, the Roman

land forces were encamped ; and picked legionaries to the number of one hundred and twenty to each warship were taken aboard the fleet. Great numbers of horses and field equipment were placed on the transports ; and elaborate preparations were made either for a landing in Africa or for a fight at sea.

The Carthaginians, in reply to these movements, crossed the sea to Lilybæum at the western cape of Sicily, and thence coasting along to Heraclea came to anchor within forty miles of the Roman's station. Their fleet consisted of three hundred and fifty vessels of five or more banks of oars, manned by one hundred and fifty thousand sailors. Unlike the Roman fleet, it contained no extra body of marines, but was equipped solely for a naval engagement — a circumstance which though making for greater ease of maneuvering was a grave disadvantage for the fighting at close quarters which the Romans would surely try to force.

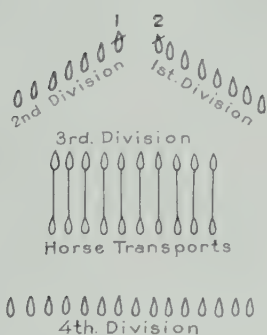
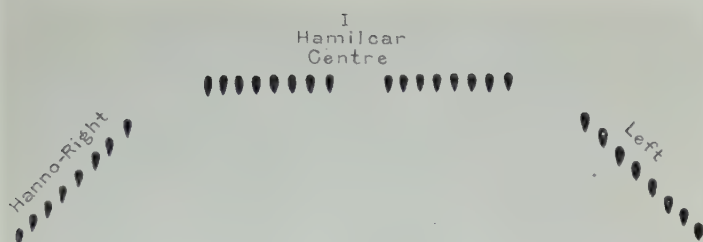
The battle which followed, though fought nearly opposite Heraclea, has taken the name of Ecnomus, the mountain looming up to the eastward. Of small importance in its effect on the outcome of the war, it is yet one of the most prodigious sea fights in history. Never before, except at Salamis and Artemisium, had such numbers fought on the water ; the sea for miles along the Sicilian coast churned and foamed under the tread of swift, onrushing war galleys, dipping and raising rhythmically their banks of hundreds of gleaming oars. The naval might

of Rome and Carthage were opposed in a grand and awful spectacle.

The Romans, realizing that they were still inferior to the enemy in tactics, arranged their fleet for defense, in the form of a huge wedge or triangle. Two divisions, advancing *en echelon* in converging columns, single file, with the consuls Manlius and Regulus each in a six-banked galley at the junction of their lines, formed the sides and the apex of the triangle; a third division (towing the horse transports) brought up the rear and formed the triangle's base. A fourth division, behind and parallel with the third, protected the horse transports and acted as a reserve. The whole disposition when complete, says Polybius, "was easy to work and serviceable, and difficult to break up."¹

The Carthaginians, relying on their ability for swift maneuvering, extended their fleet in a long line with the wings bending forward and greatly overlapping the Roman flanks. The battle opened with an advance of the consular divisions against the Punic center, which from its tenuity and extension seemed capable of little resistance. This was exactly what Hamilcar, the Punic commander at the center, wanted. He feigned flight and drew the consuls after him in swift pursuit. By this stratagem the Roman van, the wedge of the triangle, became separated from the third division, its base. When Hamilcar judged the two sections to be far

¹ Polybius, 1, 26.



1 Manlius

2 Regulus

PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF ECNOMUS, SHOWING INITIAL POSITIONS OF THE COMBATANTS

From an Engraving

enough asunder, he suddenly turned and engaged his pursuers. At the same time the Punic left wing shot eastward along the coast and charged the third Roman division; while the *right* under Hanno wheeled about and attacked the fourth or reserve division in the flank.

The battle thus resolved itself into three separate combats. The first begun — that between the Punic center and the consular divisions — was the first ended. The fight, though severe while it lasted, was never in doubt. The Carthaginians fought their ships with the utmost bravery and skill, but neither availed before the “crows” and the prowess of the Roman soldiers, inspired by the presence of both of their consuls. Once the fatal engine fell and the vessels became locked, a land combat ensued in which the numbers and the discipline of the legionaries invariably prevailed. Many Punic ships were thus captured, and the rest were soon routed and took to flight.

Meanwhile the second and third combats were proceeding in the rear. The third Roman division, encumbered by the horse transports, was thrown into great disorder by the charge of the Punic *left*. It was forced to cut the tow-ropes of the transports and engage in a desperate and unequal struggle. The fourth division farther to the east was also in a bad way. Taken by the Carthaginians in the flank it was further embarrassed by the abandoned transports which soon came drifting down upon it. A

number of Roman ships were rammed and sunk, and though the others gallantly endeavored to grapple with the enemy they were getting much the worst of the fight.

Such was the general situation when the Roman consuls, after routing the Punic center, turned their attention to the rear. Leaving his colleague Manlius to secure the prizes, Regulus, with all the undamaged vessels of his squadron, went to the aid of the hard-pressed fourth division. It was now the turn of the Carthaginian *right* to be in difficulties. Assailed on two sides, it was soon defeated and forced to flee out to sea. Only the Punic left wing now remained to be dealt with. The Roman third division which opposed it had suffered considerably and was badly demoralized; it would certainly have been annihilated, had not the fear of the "crows" prevented the Carthaginians from pressing their charges too boldly. The latter, however, were now attacked simultaneously from three sides — by Regulus with the first and fourth divisions from the east, by Manlius coming up with the *second* from the west, and by the third division directly off the coast. A few of the Punic vessels managed by swift rowing to slip through and reach the open sea, but the majority were either sunk or taken.

The general results of the battle may be briefly stated. The Carthaginians had lost thirty vessels sunk and sixty-four captured. Twenty-four Roman ships had been sunk, but not one had struck to the

enemy. The Punic fleet was totally defeated and dispersed; while the Romans, after putting back to Sicily for a few days to refit, resumed their voyage and landed their army on the coast of Africa.¹

Such were the immediate and temporary results. The abiding consequences were singularly barren. No good came to the Romans from their first expedition to Africa; and in a few years the enemy were again in a position to resume the struggle at sea. The Romans had gained the glory and the prestige of a great naval victory — that and nothing more.²

Fortune, hitherto favorable to the Romans in the war, now began to turn against them. Their army in Africa, after sweeping all before it for a time, was defeated and nearly annihilated by the Carthaginians under the Spartan mercenary general Xanthippus. A Roman fleet of three hundred and fifty

¹ Polybius, I, 25-28; Zonaras, VIII, 12.

² Arnold's comment on the battle of Ecnomus is worthy of quotation: "The Roman fleet at Ecnomus," he says, "contained 140,000 men, while less than 20,000 British seamen were engaged at Trafalgar. Yet it is not only in our generation, when Trafalgar and its consequences are fresh in our memory, that its fame will surpass a hundred-fold the fame of the battle of Ecnomus. For the twenty-seven ships which Nelson commanded at Trafalgar, by crushing the naval force of France, changed the destiny of all Europe; whilst the three hundred and thirty ships which fought at Ecnomus produced only a brief result, which within five years was no more perceivable. A fleet that could be built within a few months was no irreparable loss if destroyed; and the poor slaves who worked at the oar might be replaced by the plunder of the next campaign." Arnold, "History of Rome", p. 582.

ships, which was sent to carry off the survivors, gained a signal victory over the enemy off Hermaenæum;¹ but on its voyage home was overwhelmed by a storm off Camarina, Sicily, and all but eighty of its vessels wrecked. Never before had so great a disaster befallen a fleet; the Sicilian coast for miles was strewn with wrecks and corpses. Nor could the Romans lay the blame to anything but their own rashness. The commanders had repeatedly been warned by their Greek pilots of the dangers of the south Sicilian coast in late summer; but the "extemporized admirals", unused to tempests and intoxicated by victory, insisted on navigating the perilous shores.²

Undaunted by this disaster, the Romans at once laid down new galleys, and in 254 B.C. took the sea with three hundred fully equipped vessels. Like its predecessor, this fleet was also lost. After assisting the Roman land forces in the capture of Panormus in Sicily and raiding the Libyan coast, it was caught in a gale in the Tyrrhenian Sea and over half its vessels foundered.³

¹ The accounts of this battle vary widely. Polybius (I, 36), although devoting only four lines to it in his account, says that the Carthaginians lost 114 ships out of their fleet of 200 — a result far more brilliant and important for the Romans than that achieved at Ecnomus, which Polybius describes in great detail. Instead of 114 vessels lost, Diodorus (XXIII, frag. 12) speaks of only 24. Zonaras (VIII, 14) says that the battle was won by the Romans in Clupea sallying out in their ships and taking the enemy in the rear.

² Polybius, I, 37; Zonaras, VIII, 14.

³ Polybius, I, 38, 39; Zonaras, VIII, 14.

The war at sea for a time now languished, but on land the contest raged with redoubled fury. The Romans, after the capture of Panormus and a subsequent victory outside its walls, directed their efforts to the capture of Drepana and Lilybæum, the two remaining seaports of the Carthaginians in Sicily. To Lilybæum, in 250 B.C., they laid siege by land and sea. Two consular armies pressed the fortress from the rear, while a fleet of two hundred vessels blockaded it in front. The place, which was the Gibraltar of Sicily, was defended on the land by vast artificial fortifications, and on the sea-face by lagoons both difficult and dangerous to navigate. The Romans, to cut off the enemy from all possible communication with the outside, tried to block up the harbor by sinking vessels filled with stones at the entrances.¹ But the currents and storms swept away the obstructions; and the Punic admiral Hannibal, taking advantage of a high wind in which the Romans dared not put out to meet him, sailed into the harbor with fifty ships. Having reënforced and revictualled the garrison, he again eluded the Romans, and got away safely.²

His feat was repeated during the year 250 B.C. by a number of individual blockade runners, of whom the most daring was another Hannibal surnamed

¹ This was the first occasion, I believe, on which this expedient was resorted to in naval warfare. It has since been frequently employed, notably within recent years at the sieges of Santiago and Port Arthur.

² Polybius, I, 45, 46; Zonaras, VIII, 15; Diodorus, XXIV, frag. 1.

“the Rhodian.” This gallant seaman, a nobleman of Rhodes, hearing that the Carthaginian government were anxious to learn the state of affairs in Lilybæum, proffered his services to run the blockade and report how things were going in that city.

The offer delighted them, but they did not believe in the possibility of its fulfillment with the Roman fleet lying at the very entrance of the channel. However, the man fitted out his own private vessel and put to sea. He first crossed to one of the islands lying off Lilybæum. Next day he obtained a wind in the right quarter, and about ten o'clock in the morning actually sailed into the harbor in full view of the enemy, who looked on with amazement at his audacity. Next day he lost no time in setting about a return voyage. The Roman consul had determined upon taking extra precautions for watching the sea near the channel: with this view he had during the night got ready his ten fastest sailing vessels, and taking up a position on shore close to the harbor mouth, was watching with his own eyes what would happen. The whole army was watching also; while the ships on both sides of the mouth of the channel got as close to the shallows as it was possible to approach, and there rested with their oars out, and ready to run down and capture the ship that was about to sail out. The Rhodian, on his side, attempted no concealment. He put boldly to sea, and so confounded the enemy by his audacity and the speed of his vessel, that he not only sailed out without receiving any damage to ship or crew, scudding along the bows of the enemy as though they were fixed in their places, but even brought his ship to, after

running a short way ahead, and, with his oars out and ready, seemed to challenge the foe to a contest. When none of them ventured to put out to attack him because of the speed of his rowing, he sailed away: having thus with his one ship successfully defied the fleet of the enemy. From this time he frequently performed the same feats and proved exceedingly serviceable both to the government at Carthage and the besieged garrison. To the former by informing them from time to time what was pressingly necessary; and to the latter by inspiring them with confidence, and dismaying the Romans by his audacity.

What contributed most to encourage him to a repetition of the feat was the fact that by frequent experience he had marked out the course for himself by clear landmarks. As soon as he had crossed the open sea, and was coming into sight, he used to steer as though he were coming from Italy, keeping the seaward tower exactly on his bows, in such a way as to be in line with the city towers that faced Libya; and this is the only possible course to hit the mouth of the channel with the wind astern.

The successful boldness of the Rhodian inspired several of those who were acquainted with these waters to make similar attempts.¹

Like most blockade runners, the Rhodian at length became too venturesome and was captured. His ship, which was of superior build and speed, enabled the Romans to intercept all who in the future attempted to run the blockade; and in later years the vessel was used as a model for the Roman warships

¹ Polybius, I, 46, 47.

that defeated the enemy in the decisive fight off the Ægates Isles.¹

While the siege of Lilybæum was proceeding, the main Punic fleet had assembled at Drepana, a long wide inlet of the sea some twenty miles north of Lilybæum. Thence Adherbal, the Punic commander, sent forth swift cruisers to intercept the Roman supply ships and to harry the coasts of Italy and Sicily.

To remove this menace, Publius Claudius, one of the consuls for 249 B.C., determined to destroy the enemy's fleet at its moorings. He had good reason for thinking that Adherbal was not expecting such a blow, and he believed that a sudden attack would have every chance of success. His plan, though a bold one, was unfortunately beyond his competence to execute. Claudius was rash and ambitious, but without experience in naval warfare. He had recently arrived at Lilybæum with a fresh division of ten thousand sailors, and he was desirous of signalizing his term of office by some brilliant, crushing exploit. His character is well revealed by his injudicious conduct before the battle. When the augurs reported that the sacred chickens of the fleet refused to eat — an inauspicious omen — “let them drink if they will not eat,” he cried, and ordered them thrown overboard. While thus stirring the superstitious fears of the sailors, he subjected them to a severe and cruel discipline, arrogantly

¹ Polybius, I, 47; Zonaras, VIII, 15.

treated his subordinates, and loudly criticized the conduct of his predecessors in office. He failed, however, to take the ordinary preparatory measures which prudence and experience dictated. He allowed his new crews no time for training, and he even neglected to equip his ships with "crows." His sole idea was to take the enemy by surprise: Drepana harbor would afford no room for maneuvering; "ship would crash against ship, and the legionaries would settle the result."¹

Having filled his ships with picked soldiers from the army for marines, Claudius put to sea at midnight and arrived in sight of Drepana about dawn next morning. The Punic admiral Adherbal was indeed surprised when he saw the Roman fleet, but with admirable presence of mind he quickly got his crews on board and ranged his ships "close under the rocks on the opposite side of the harbor to that by which the Romans were entering."²

Claudius, seeing the enemy prepared to fight, suddenly lost his nerve; and, as his ships were entering the harbor, gave the signal to turn about and make the best of their way out. In executing this maneuver, however, inevitable disorder ensued; ship collided with ship; many of the oars were broken, throwing the rowers into confusion. Yet by strenuous efforts the Roman captains managed to work their ships out and form in line close off shore to the south of the harbor. Claudius, who had originally led the

¹ Shuckburgh, p. 260.

² Polybius, I, 49.

van, now described a wide arc out to sea and took his station at the extreme left of the Roman line.

Scarcely had the Romans gotten into position when the enemy were upon them. Adherbal had sent a flying squadron of five ships to envelop the Roman left; but leading the way with his main fleet, he swept in front of the hostile prows till his flagship reached a point nearly opposite the southern end of the Roman line. Changing then from column into line-abreast formation, he bore down on the Roman fleet with all his ships. The battle which followed was for a long time stubbornly contested, but the superiority of the Carthaginians soon became evident. Their ships were swifter and handier, their crews better trained and officered. Their position, too, gave them an almost infinite advantage. With the whole sea behind them, they could charge, retire, or come to one another's aid with perfect ease; while the Romans, backed close against the land, were unable to maneuver except with the greatest difficulty. The Carthaginians no longer had the dreaded "crows" to fear. They were full of fight and enthusiasm, confident in themselves and their leader; they fought as they had never fought before. Dashing in and out, they charged continually, ramming, disabling, sinking right and left. The Romans were demoralized by their losses and justly distrustful of their commander. Their line at length gave way, shattered in a dozen places. Many vessels had grounded, others deliberately beached — such

of the crews as could escaping to the shore. Claudius was already in flight. He had seen that the day was against him, and followed by thirty galleys eluded the Punic vessels and escaped along the shore to Lilybæum.

Out of two hundred and twenty Roman vessels engaged only thirty escaped. Ninety-seven Roman ships were sunk, ninety-three were captured, along with twenty thousand prisoners. The Punic fleet, if one may believe Diodorus, suffered only negligible losses, though its numbers at the beginning of the fight were less than half those of the Romans! It was the first and only great naval victory which the Carthaginians won in the war; it was the most crushing defeat which either side sustained.

The moral effect of the battle is seen by the diverse receptions given the commanders by their countrymen at home. Adherbal became at once the idol of Carthage. Claudius was recalled to Rome and forced, amid universal execration, to abdicate the consulship and name a dictator. He was later brought to trial and heavily fined. According to some accounts he was put to death; according to others he committed suicide. It is certain that he survived his disgrace only a few years; for in 245 B.C. he was no longer living.¹

¹ For the battle of Drepana and its aftermath: Polybius, I, 49-51; Livy, "Epitome", XIX, 26; Eutropius, II, 26; Suetonius, "Tiberius", II; Florus, II, 2; Diodorus, XXIV, frag. 1; Valerius Maximus, I, 4; Aulus Gellius, X, 6.

The accounts of the numbers and losses in this battle vary greatly.

The Roman people were none too severe in their treatment of Claudius, which, when compared with the Punic practice of crucifying their unsuccessful admirals, was leniency itself. His criminal rashness and negligence — his failure to train his crews and provide boarding bridges — were responsible for his defeat and brought upon Rome one of the most terrible disasters in her history. "The single imprudent act of an inexperienced and thoughtless commander," says Mommsen, "had thrown away all that had been attained with so much dif-

Polybius merely states that 30 Roman ships escaped and that 93 were captured. He says nothing of the number of the Roman ships sunk, the Carthaginian losses, or the strength of the opposing fleets at the beginning of the battle. Diodorus, who draws from the contemporary but rabid pro-Punic historian Philinus, and whose figures are therefore open to suspicion, tells us that the Romans had 210 ships in the battle as against the Carthaginians' 90; that while the former lost 117 ships and 20,000 men, the latter lost not a single ship nor a single man killed. Eutropius, a writer of the later Roman Empire, states that out of 220 Roman ships engaged only 30 escaped, and that 90 ships together with 20,000 prisoners were taken, the rest of the ships being sunk. These figures, which are derived in part from some lost independent authority, are probably substantially correct. They agree in round numbers with the figures of Polybius, so far as the latter's go; and for the numbers of the Roman fleet at the beginning of the battle they virtually coincide with those of Diodorus. We know from Polybius, moreover, that the number of the Roman fleet at the beginning of the blockade of Lilybæum was 200 ships; all of which, with whatever blockade runners may have been captured, would almost certainly have been used in the expedition against Drepana. All the Greek and Roman writers except Diodorus are silent, probably from patriotic reasons, on the numbers and losses of the Punic fleet. Though the figures of Diodorus are almost certainly a gross understatement, we may reasonably infer from them that the Carthaginian losses were relatively insignificant compared with the Roman.

ficulty by the long and galling warfare around Lilybæum.”¹

Rome's cup of bitterness was now overflowing. The Carthaginians again controlled the sea and pushed their advantage to the uttermost. They immediately revictualled Lilybæum, and by a sudden raid destroyed the remnant of the vanquished fleet at its station off that town. To complete the sum of the Romans' misfortunes, they presently experienced another great shipwreck. A fleet of one hundred and twenty warships and eight hundred transports laden with supplies for the besiegers of Lilybæum was driven on the rocky southern shore of Sicily and totally destroyed. This was the fourth great fleet the Romans had lost in the war. No wonder they now became discouraged and disgusted with the sea. They ceased building fleets and for five years practically abandoned the water. They maintained enough ships, however, to convoy troops and supplies across the narrow Straits of Messana, of which they controlled both sides, and they occasionally sent forth privateers which preyed on the enemy's commerce and even made daring descents on the African coast.

The main interest during these years lies in the war on land, and to that some attention must be paid in order to understand the final naval events of the conflict. The Romans, despite the loss of their fleets, persisted in the siege of Lilybæum, which

¹ Mommsen, II, 189.

they closely invested by land, though unable to prevent supplies from entering by sea. In 248 B.C. they seized the high mountain of Eryx, situated a little to the north of Drepana. Around Lilybæum, Eryx, and Drepana, which they were able also partially to invest, the war raged during the years 249-243 B.C. The Carthaginians, though holding only Drepana and Lilybæum, were able, with those as bases and the command of the sea, to strike sudden and unexpected blows over a large area. Their efforts were stimulated in 247 B.C. by the entrance of Hamilcar Barca, father of the great Hannibal, into the war.

A born leader and warrior, he brought to the aid of his countrymen an ability, a daring, a perseverance, which would have ruined the cause of any people less tough and resolute than the Romans. After ravaging the coast of southern Italy with his fleet, he returned suddenly to Sicily and seized the high table-land of Ercte rising almost sheer out of the sea between Drepana and Panormus. From Ercte, which he fortified and held against all assaults, he sent forth raiding expeditions by sea and land. On one occasion he would ravage the Italian seaboard as far north as Cumæ; at another time he would swoop down on some unguarded Sicilian town, or waylay an isolated Roman detachment. Skirmishes, ambuscades, sorties, assaults took place almost daily for three years; now one side, now the other scored a success. Polybius aptly compares the combatants to two boxers, equal in courage and

physical condition: "As the match goes on blow after blow is interchanged without intermission; but to anticipate or keep account of every feint or blow is impossible alike to the combatants or the spectators."¹

The sole result of this struggle was a complete deadlock. The Romans were unable to dislodge the Carthaginians from their strongholds. The Carthaginians, though severely harassing the Romans, could not shake the latter's hold on the rest of Sicily. By 243 B.C. it again became evident that if the Romans were to end the war they must strike once more for the command of the sea. The time seemed ripe for such an attempt. The Carthaginians, lulled to security by their rival's naval inactivity, had reduced their fleet to a minimum, neglecting even to maintain its efficiency. In Italy, on the other hand, the success of a number of privateersmen had revived the popular faith in a navy. As the national treasury was too exhausted to finance the building of a fleet, private patriotism came to the State's aid. Wealthy citizens, either singly or in groups, agreed to furnish each a warship; in this way the necessary funds were raised and the cost of two hundred quinqueremes was defrayed.

The new vessels, planned for speed and offensive tactics, were modeled after the galley of Hannibal the Rhodian, which, as we have seen, had been finally captured off Lilybæum and had been sent to

¹ Polybius, I, 55-58; Diodorus, XXIV, frag. 2; Zonaras, VIII, 16.

Italy prior to the disaster of Drepana. Of the *corvi* we hear no more, either now or hereafter.¹

The Roman fleet under the command of the consul Gaius Lutatius set sail from the Tiber early in the summer of 242 B.C. Its appearance off the coast of Sicily was a complete surprise to the enemy. Their squadrons had returned for the season to Africa; the seas were clear; and Lutatius was able to take possession of Drepana harbor and blockade Lilybæum without opposition. While investing those cities in company with the land forces, he carefully prepared for the inevitable sea fight. He put his fleet daily through battle maneuvers and practiced his rowers incessantly. By the day of battle, says Polybius, his crews "had attained the condition of trained athletes before a contest."²

The final battle took place among the Ægates Isles, a short distance northwest of Lilybæum. The comparative conditions of the combatants were exactly the reverse of what they had been at Drepana. The Roman ships were now swift and agile, while the Punic vessels, laden with supplies and munitions for their besieged garrisons, were heavy and unmanœuvrable. For the first time, too, the Romans were superior to the enemy in seamanship. Thus the issue was virtually decided before the battle began. In the strong half-gale in which it was fought, the heavy Punic vessels labored under a hopeless disadvantage as against the mobile Roman galleys

¹ Polybius, I, 59; Zonaras, VII, 16.

² Polybius, I, 59.



BATTLE OF THE AEGATES ISLES
From an Engraving

manned by crews who made nothing of the choppy sea and boisterous weather. The Romans rammed and boarded their enemies with perfect ease, and after a few charges defeated and scattered them in flight. Fifty Punic ships were sunk, and seventy, along with ten thousand prisoners, captured. The rest of the Carthaginians' fleet,¹ favored by a sudden veering of the wind, set their sails and escaped to Africa.²

This was the last battle of the war. It shattered the hopes of the Carthaginians and revived the courage of the Romans. The latter now controlled both land and sea, and in a short time would be able to starve the Punic garrisons in Sicily into surrender. On the advice of Hamilcar, therefore, the Carthaginian government wisely sued for peace. Both sides were completely exhausted; but the Romans, having the advantage of position, could dictate terms. Carthage was forced to evacuate Sicily and to agree to pay an indemnity of three thousand two hundred talents within ten years. On these conditions peace was reestablished between the peoples.³

The First Punic War which thus came to an end is probably the greatest sea contest in antiquity. It

¹ The total number of Carthaginian ships engaged was 250.

² Polybius, I, 59-61; Valerius Maximus, II, 8, 2; Eutropius, II, 27; Zonaras, VIII, 17; Diodorus, frag. 12. Valerius Maximus gives an entertaining account of the dispute between Lutatius and the prætor Q. Valerius as to which one was in actual command of the fleet during the battle. The dispute and its settlement may be regarded as the original prototype of the Sampson-Schley controversy.

³ Polybius, I, 62-63; Nepos, "Hamilcar," I.

lasted twenty-four years, and it transferred the sovereignty of the sea and the possession of Sicily from Carthage to Rome.¹ In it was employed extensively for the first time the quinquereme or the dreadnaught of antiquity. The size of its fleets was prodigious. Over five hundred warships were engaged in one battle; in another the numbers approached seven hundred. The Romans lost approximately seven hundred quinqueremes in the war, including those wrecked; the Carthaginians about five hundred. In the fighting power of the armaments and in the intensity and severity of the fighting, the struggle probably surpassed both the Peloponnesian and the Persian naval contests.²

The result was an immense triumph for the Roman race and the Roman character. That an essentially land people could rise at a bound from naval insignificance to naval supremacy is certainly among the marvels of history. "The Roman fleet," says Mommsen, "with all its unwieldy grandeur was the noblest creation of genius in the war." "The fleets of Rome," says Shuckburgh, "were again and again destroyed from the incompetency of her navigators or the superiority of the skilled Phœnician seamen;

¹ Henceforth the Romans spoke of the Mediterranean as "our sea" (*mare nostrum*).

² Polybius, I, 63. For the size of the fleets in the First Punic War, see Polybius, I, 64; Clark, "Influence of Sea Power on Roman Republic", appnd. III; Tarn, "The Fleets of the First Punic War" (*Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1907); H. S. Jones, "Companion to Roman History", pp. 257-266.

but the waves had scarcely closed over one hastily built fleet when the indefatigable Romans were felling timber and training rowers to form and man another." Roman adaptability and energy, Roman patriotism and strength of soul overcame Phœnician wealth and mercenary numbers.

SECTION III. THE ROMAN REPUBLICAN NAVY, 241 B.C. TO 36 B.C.

In the centuries following the First Punic War the Roman navy performed three great functions: first, as an auxiliary of the Roman armies in the conquest of the Mediterranean lands; second, as a guardian of the seas against piracy; third, as an instrument of the rival leaders in the civil wars. Following these three heads, I shall endeavor to show the influence of naval power on the destinies of the later Republic, and to touch on the more important naval events.

In the supreme crisis of her fate, the struggle with Hannibal in the Second Punic War, Rome's navy played a vitally important but unobtrusive part. In that contest no great naval battle was fought; only four minor sea engagements occurred — two off Lilybæum, one off the Ebro, and one off Tarentum — in all but the last of which the Romans were easily successful. The size of the fleets, too, was in no way comparable with those of the First Punic War. Yet the naval superiority which Rome stead-

ily and strongly maintained throughout the struggle exerted an influence which can scarcely be overrated. By her command of the sea Rome was able to shift her legions easily and rapidly between Italy and Spain, to attack and destroy the base of Hannibal's power in the latter country, to intercept his communications, and finally to invade Africa and bring the war to a victorious close. Indirectly, the Roman sea power by its "silent pressure" induced Hannibal to discard the easy and natural sea route for his invasion of Italy, and to choose the long and difficult way through Spain and Gaul, wherein over half his veteran army and important parts of his equipment perished. The same factor, exerted in the same way, likewise prevented important reinforcements from reaching him in Italy by sea — either from Spain, from Africa, or from his ally, Macedon.¹

The Roman sea control in this war, as Mahan points out, was by no means absolute. In the year after Cannæ, the Punic admiral Bomilcar landed at Locri with some four thousand Numidian cavalry and a body of elephants — a small but welcome reinforcement to Hannibal's depleted forces. Ten years later a Carthaginian fleet descended on Liguria and destroyed the city of Genoa. Hannibal himself in 205 B.C. returned with his wasted army by sea to the aid of his imperiled fatherland. These and other like instances only serve to prove the

¹Mahan, "Influence of Sea Power upon History", Introduction.

truth which Mahan so brilliantly formulates — that “the control of the sea, however real, does not imply that an enemy’s single ships or small squadrons cannot steal out of port, cannot cross more or less frequented tracts of ocean, make harassing descents upon unprotected points, enter blockaded harbors”; that “such evasions are always possible to some extent to the weaker party, however great the inequality of naval strength.” This principle, which operates even in the present day, worked far more strongly in the ancient world, when the sciences of naval warfare and navigation were still comparatively in their infancy.

It is evident, therefore, that Rome’s sea control in the Second Punic War, though incomplete, was none the less effective. Considering the immense tangible and positive advantages she derived from it, considering the almost certain result of the war had it been held by Carthage, it is not an exaggeration to say, with Mahan, that sea power was the most decisive of the factors that determined the issue of the conflict.¹

The wars of conquest which Rome waged in the decade succeeding the defeat of Hannibal depended

¹ The naval events of the Second Punic War which I have referred to, as well as many others, may be found in the following ancient authorities: Polybius, III, 33, 87, 95, 96; Livy, XXI, 22, 49, 50, XXII, 19, 56, 57, XXIII, 13, 41, XXVII, 29, XXVIII, 46, XXX, 18; Appian, VII, 16; Zonaras, VIII, 16. For the theory of sea control which I have quoted, see Mahan’s Introduction, “Influence of Sea Power upon History.”

primarily upon her command of the sea. In the Second Macedonian and Syrian wars her fleets conveyed her armies to Greece, Macedon, Asia Minor, and coöperated effectively with the land operations. By an alliance with Rhodes, the dominant naval power of the Ægean, Rome secured a strategic base in that sea and the aid of the strongest fleet next her own in the Mediterranean. The Roman and Rhodian fleets controlled the sea, and the few naval battles fought were merely assertions of an overwhelming naval superiority.¹

In the years of peace following the Syrian War the Roman navy underwent a rapid decline. The Roman fleet, says Mommsen truly, "was but a grand makeshift and always remained so";² it was "national in name only and was always treated with

¹ Polybius, XVI, 2-4. Livy, XXXVI, 22; XXXVII, 4-30. Appian, XI, 22-27. The Rhodians especially distinguished themselves in the naval operations. Their vessels were equipped with iron pans or baskets filled with burning materials, attached to long poles revolving at the prows. By means of chains the baskets were dropped on the decks of the enemy's vessels with fatal effect, making them so dread a charge that, "in avoiding it, they frequently presented their broadsides to the Rhodian prows, and so were more easily staved in."

In return for her valuable services to Rome, Rhodes received but shabby treatment. She was allowed important additions to her territory in Asia Minor at the end of the Syrian war; but these were taken from her twenty years later. Rome looked with jealousy on Rhodes's naval power and her possession of the carrying trade of the eastern Mediterranean. Besides depriving her of Caria and Lycia, she crippled her commerce by declaring Delos a free port and handing it over to Athens, thus diverting much of the traffic of the Levant from Rhodes to the ancient mistress of the Ægean.

² This, however, is true only of the Republican, not of the later Imperial, Roman navy.

the affection of a stepmother. The naval service continued to be little esteemed in comparison with the high honor of serving with the legions; the naval officers were in great part Italian Greeks; the crews were composed of subjects and even of slaves and outcasts. The Italian farmer was at all times distrustful of the sea; and of all things that Cato in his life regretted one was, that he had travelled by sea when he might have gone by land.”¹ No regular profession of naval officers existed, and the commanders of the fleet were named only when the occasion arose. When the immediate need of a navy ceased, it was cast aside by the Romans in disgust. The ships were allowed to rot in the harbors, the dockyards to go to ruin, and piracy to overspread the seas.

The decay of the navy was painfully apparent when, in 171 B.C., Rome was suddenly plunged into the Third Macedonian War. Only forty effective warships could be mustered to convoy the Roman army of invasion across the Adriatic to Epirus. King Perseus of Macedon possessed no fleet at the beginning of the war, but his hastily equipped navy defeated a Roman squadron, captured an entire fleet of transports, and continually harassed the Roman supplies and communications. For a time his cruisers swept the Ægean almost unopposed. A commission of the Roman Senate sent to investigate the condition of the fleet reported a scandalous

¹ Mommsen, II, 200.

inefficiency. "Many of the seamen had perished from sickness; others, particularly the Sicilian contingent, had deserted; the ships were in want of men, while those that remained on board had received neither pay nor clothing."¹ A change of commanders and a determination on the part of the Senate to remedy the evils brought a turn for the better, but not until the war had been practically decided by the land victory of Pydna, which was followed speedily by the collapse of Perseus' power.²

Even worse was the situation at the beginning of the First Mithridatic War. The national dislike of the sea and a long series of exhausting wars on land had brought the Roman naval establishment almost to the point of extinction. Scarcely an Italian warship existed. Rome was incapable for the time being of carrying on a naval war or even of checking piracy. In this predicament Mithridates, king of Pontus, in 88 B.C. declared war. His fleet, numbering four hundred war galleys manned by the hardy Greek sailors of the Black Sea, captured a weak squadron of Roman allies guarding the Bosphorus, and bursting through the Hellespont spread like a tidal wave over the Ægean. All of Rome's allies in that sea were overpowered with the exception of Rhodes, whose stout walls and efficient fleet repulsed every assault of the Asiatic monarch.

¹ Livy, XLIV, 20.

² Livy, XLIV, 28; Appian, "Res Macedonicae", XVI and XVIII.

Through the rest of the Ægean the Pontic squadrons sailed at will; the Pontic armies swept victorious over Asia Minor and the whole of Greece south of Macedon. Such was the situation when the Roman proconsul Sulla in 87 B.C. crossed the Adriatic with five legions. He was not accompanied by a single warship. He had scarcely landed in Macedon, moreover, when the democratic faction of Marius rose behind him in Italy, overturned the government, and declared him a public enemy. Henceforth he could expect no aid from Italy, but must rely wholly on the resources of the East for conducting the war.

For two years the navy of Mithridates held the sea. Sulla, however, while besieging Athens and Piræus, sent his able lieutenant, L. Lucullus, on a mission to collect a fleet. Starting with only six small Greek galleys, Lucullus cruised for two years through the Levant, visiting Egypt, Syria, Phœnicia, Rhodes, and Cyprus, and entreating the rulers of those places to furnish him ships. He experienced wonderful adventures, was constantly chased by Pontic and pirate squadrons, and had hair breadth escapes; but he gradually succeeded in collecting a fleet of a formidable and efficient character. At last, in 85 B.C., reinforced by vessels which Sulla himself had been building in Greece, he ventured to take the offensive. He won two considerable naval actions off Lectum and Tenedos, and made possible the crossing of Sulla's army to Asia. There

the terror of the victorious legions and the defection of the Asiatic cities speedily brought Mithridates to terms. He was forced to restore all his conquests and to surrender to Sulla an important part of his fleet, by which the latter returned with his army to Italy and wreaked vengeance on his political opponents.¹

Much the same course of events happened in the Third Mithridatic War (74-63 B.C.). The Roman navy had again fallen into decay, while Mithridates had spared no efforts to reorganize and strengthen his fleet. Again the Romans were swept from the Black Sea, and the Pontic ships swarmed into the Ægean. Lucullus, who was now commander in chief in the East, once more collected a fleet from the Asiatic and Ægean cities. With this he sailed in pursuit and annihilated two of the enemy's squadrons off Tenedos and Lemnos. He then took his fleet into the Black Sea, where the Pontic navy was unable longer to oppose him. With the exception of two minor battles off Heraclea and the mouth of the Hellespont, the remaining operations at sea were confined to a blockade of the Black Sea ports by the Romans. But the naval successes of Lucullus had paved the way for his splendid victories and conquests in Armenia and the Tigris valley.²

¹ Appian, "De Bellis Mithridaticis", XVII-LVIII; Plutarch, "Lucullus", II-IV; Plutarch, "Sulla", XI, XV, XVI; Livy, "Epitome", LXXVIII.

² Plutarch, "Lucullus", VIII, XII, XIII; Appian, "De Bellis Mithridaticis", LXIX-LXXVIII; Livy, "Epitome", XCV.

The decadent tendencies of the Roman navy are seen not only in the foreign wars but in the unprecedented growth of piracy. That scourge had existed from earliest times in the Mediterranean, and only in certain favored periods and localities had it been temporarily stamped out.¹ The Athenian naval power had for almost a century virtually suppressed it in the *Ægean*; the fleets of Carthage had for long periods rendered the southwestern Mediterranean comparatively safe. But with the utter decay of Athens in the East and the downfall of Carthage in the West, the evil had increased to a tremendous extent. No adequate naval power, no efficient maritime police existed to check it. Rome, the potential mistress of the Mediterranean, made little effort to safeguard the seas beyond the immediate waters of Italy. Rhodes, the third-rate successor of Athens, could do little more than attempt to protect her own commerce. The war fleets of Carthage, Syria, and Macedon had been destroyed or surrendered by treaty. The result was that in the long peace following the Third Macedonian War piracy was allowed to become organized and consolidated. Having their harbors in Crete and the inlets and bays of Cilicia, the pirates banded together in large fleets, formed a rude government, and infested the entire eastern Mediterranean.

¹ "There was never a time," says Dio Cassius (XXXVI, 20), "when piracy was not practised, nor may it cease as long as the nature of mankind remains the same."

Their numbers and audacity rose to such a height that commerce was threatened with extinction, and the sea had become almost impassible to any but large vessels with armed men on board. Scarcely a temple or sacred asylum in Asia, Greece, or Epirus had escaped their ravages. The shores of Italy itself were not safe from them. They had captured two Roman prætors with their attendants, and carried off ladies of high rank. They had even run into the harbors of Caieta and Ostia and set fire to the ships. Now and again some of their victims proved strong enough to be avenged upon them. In 76 B.C., for instance, they captured Julius Cæsar on his way to Rhodes, and exacted a ransom of fifty talents. He raised the money in certain Greek towns, and then having obtained ships captured and caused them to be put to death at Pergamus. But though some fitful and partial attacks had been made upon them from time to time, no great or determined effort had been made to put them down.¹

With the outbreak of the First Mithridatic War the activity and boldness of the pirates redoubled. They allied themselves with Mithridates, and sailing in large fleets captured whole islands and towns. Iassus and Samos, Clazomenæ and Samothrace were seized by them. The booty taken from the sanctuary of the latter place alone is said to have amounted to a thousand talents. Delos, with its famous shrines and temples, was sacked and the entire population carried off into slavery. The pirates negotiated with the slave leader Spartacus in Italy and aided the rebel Sertorius in Spain. They

¹ Shuckburgh, p. 680.

captured entire fleets laden with supplies for the Roman armies in the East. Finally, they cut off the sea-borne grain supplies of Italy and caused a serious famine in the capital.

This was the last straw. The Romans in 67 B.C. roused themselves to crush the pirate power. By the *lex Gabinia*, carried in the popular assembly, the entire Mediterranean with its coasts up to fifty miles inland was assigned to Cneius Pompey in absolute command for a period of three years. Five hundred new war galleys, one hundred and twenty-five thousand soldiers, and six thousand talents were voted for his immediate use. He was granted the additional power of raising troops and collecting money in the provinces; the resources of the entire empire were to be placed, if need be, at his disposal.

Pompey lost no time in going about his task. By the spring of 66 B.C. he had divided the Mediterranean into thirteen districts or zones, to each of which he allotted a squadron with a legate in charge to sweep and clear of pirates. The grain routes from Africa, Sicily, and Sardinia were patrolled; and Pompey himself with a squadron *d'élite* sailed from place to place wherever his presence was required. The pirates were defeated in battle, their barks driven from the sea, and their strongholds in Crete, Cilicia, and Pamphylia stormed. Within three months the sea had been cleared and made safe for commerce. Thirteen hundred pirate

craft of all sorts were said to have been destroyed, and nearly four hundred vessels captured. About ten thousand pirates were slain in battle, while twenty thousand fell into the hands of the Romans or submitted voluntarily. Many of the latter Pompey settled in towns in Asia Minor which had been devastated in the Mithridatic wars.¹

Ten years later (56 B.C.), Julius Cæsar, while engaged in the conquest of Gaul, defeated the sailing ships of the hardy seamen of the Breton coast with the aid of Roman galleys brought round from the Mediterranean.² Then crossing over with an army to Britain, whose insular character was still imperfectly known, he opened to Roman conquest and civilization that great island, which was destined after eighteen hundred years to become the haughty mistress of many seas.³

Pompey's and Cæsar's successful operations at sea and the naval triumphs of Lucullus had the effect of arresting the decay of the Roman fleet and producing a genuine naval revival. Vast sums were lavished on warship construction, and in the conflicts preceding the establishment of the Empire sea power played a large and important rôle. Again

¹ Plutarch, "Pompey", XXIV-XXVIII; Appian, "De Bellis Mithridaticis", XCII-XCVII; Dio, XXXVI, 21; Florus, III, 6; Velleius Paterculus, VI, 31, 32; Livy, XL, 18.

² This was the first naval battle, says Mommsen, so far as historical knowledge reaches, fought in the Atlantic.

³ Cæsar, "De Bello Gallico", III, 7, 10-12; Dio, XXXIX, 40-43; Strabo, IV, 4.

the Mediterranean was swept by fleets of tremendous size; again the fate of its lands was decided by naval battles.

At the outset of the struggle between Julius Cæsar and Pompey, the latter held all warships, ports, docks, and other maritime resources of the Republic, outside of Italy, at his disposal. His fleet of five hundred galleys, composed principally of squadrons from Egypt, Phœnicia, Rhodes, Athens, and other subject States of the East, commanded the sea and threatened to starve Cæsar and Italy into submission. Pompey's very name was so potent in the Levant since his triumph over the pirates "that its mere mention would suffice to raise ships in lands that had always been ready to furnish naval assistance to Rome."¹

Yet despite this tremendous superiority Pompey accomplished almost nothing with his navy; the same incapacity, the same timidity, which paralyzed his operations on land, characterized his conduct of the war at sea. Cæsar with a hastily equipped and hastily manned fleet was allowed to get possession of Sicily and Sardinia, to import supplies of grain, to defeat the fleet of Marseilles and reduce that town — all with practically no opposition from the Pompeian fleet.

Cæsar's bold genius, it is true, had much to do with his success, and his genius was seconded by

¹ F. W. Clark, "Influence of Sea Power upon the Roman Republic", p. 82.

marvelous good fortune. With a daring that bordered on foolhardiness he ran the blockade of the enemy's fleet in the Adriatic and crossed safely with his army in transports to Epirus (January, 46 B.C.).¹ Six months later he broke Pompey's power on land, in the battle of Pharsalia. Pompey's Levantine allies thereupon recalled their squadrons, while the rest of his navy scattered over the Mediterranean and was beaten in detail.²

No naval events of importance occurred in the war between the conspirators Brutus and Cassius and the triumvirs Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus; but after the formers' overthrow at Philippi a long and arduous struggle at sea occurred. Sextus Pompey, one of the sons of Cneius Pompey, had headed a revolt in Spain after Cæsar's assassination, won over that country, and laid the basis of a naval power in its southern ports. Driven at length from the

¹ Cæsar's transports were inadequate to take more than two thirds of his force across at a single transit. Having effected a landing in Epirus, he sent the ships back to Brundisium to bring over the rest of his army. The transports were attacked on the return voyage by the Pompeian admiral Bibulus, who captured some thirty vessels and damaged others. For several months Cæsar's lieutenant, Antony, was unable to sail from Brundisium in the face of the strict blockade that Bibulus kept. Not till after Bibulus's death did he dare venture on a crossing with his army, which, after a frustrated attempt, he effected in the midst of a high gale.

² Dio, XLI, 10-52, XLII, 2; Florus, II, 13, 31-32; Cicero, "Ad Atticus", VIII, 3, 7; IX, 6-19; X, 4-8; Cæsar, "De Bello Civili", I, 25-36, 58-60; II, 3-7, 21-22, 42-43; III, 2-25, 30-71, 78, 83, 101; Appian, "De Bellis Civilibus", II, 36-88; "De Bello Alexandrino", 1-25; "De Bellis Africanis", 23-24, 62-63; Plutarch, "Pompey", 62-66; "Cæsar", 35-40, 64, 76.

peninsula by the triumvirs, he betook himself to Marseilles, where he proceeded to recruit his sea forces and carry on piracy upon a large scale. He swept the Mediterranean with his fleets, ravaged the coasts of Italy, and wrested the whole of Sicily from the triumvirs. That island now became the base of his naval power, which embraced the Mediterranean. Like the pirates whom his father had suppressed, he cut off the grain supplies of Italy and caused a famine in Rome. He held a brilliant court in Syracuse, where, with a trident in his hand and clad in a sea-blue mantle, he caused himself to be styled the son of Neptune. Though vain, he was a man of ferocious nature, and he attracted to himself droves of pirates, robbers, desperadoes, and runaway slaves, whom he ruled with a rod of iron but enriched with booty. The stern discipline which he established made his fleet the most efficient of the time. Octavian led an expedition against him in 42 B.C. but failed miserably; and in 39 B.C. the triumvirs found it necessary to conclude peace, ceding to Sextus full possession of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica.

A year later the war with Sextus broke out afresh. Sextus renewed his depredations, and Octavian, while calling on his colleagues for help, hastily collected a fleet. But before his squadrons could unite they were attacked by Sextus separately, and Octavian himself was badly defeated in the Straits of Messina. Octavian thereupon relinquished per-

sonal command and intrusted his fleet to his admiral Agrippa. The latter set about methodically to organize victory by collecting the remnant of Octavian's fleet in the Bay of Naples and assembling there thousands of shipwrights, navvies, and other workmen from all over Italy. Three hundred war galleys were immediately laid down and rushed to completion. By the summer of 36 B.C. they were fully equipped and their crews trained. Antony coöperated by sending a squadron of one hundred and thirty ships from Greece; while Lepidus, the third triumvir, agreed to launch an attack on Sextus from Africa.

Sextus Pompey was thus attacked from all sides at once. On July 1, 36 B.C., three naval expeditions sailed against him. Lepidus embarked from Carthage with seventy war galleys and twelve legions in transports. Taurus with one hundred and two of Antony's ships put out from Tarentum. Agrippa with the main fleet sailed from the Bay of Naples. A violent gale and storm, however, upset these careful arrangements: Agrippa's fleet was damaged and forced to return to port; Taurus also had to put back to Tarentum; while Lepidus alone of the three succeeded in reaching Sicily.

Not till the end of the month was Agrippa able to resume his voyage. After taking possession of the Lipari Isles, he met with a light cruiser squadron of the enemy off Mylæ and gained a slight advantage. Octavian meanwhile had experienced his

usual luck at sea. After crossing the Straits of Messina with three legions in Taurus's fleet, he had been routed on his way back and nearly captured by Sextus. Yet he had succeeded in landing an army in Sicily, which Agrippa was able constantly to reënforce by the aid of his fleet. With the approach of Lepidus from the west the position of Sextus rapidly became desperate. Outnumbered and nearly surrounded by hostile forces on land, his sole hope lay in crushing his enemies on the sea. He accordingly resolved to play his last card, to force a general and decisive naval engagement.

Mustering one hundred and eighty ships at Messina, he sailed against Agrippa stationed with his fleet to the westward, off Naulochus. The battle ensuing was the greatest in point of numbers fought since the First Punic War. The fleet of Agrippa numbered three hundred vessels. His ships were the last word in naval construction, being long galleys of thick oak timbers and high freeboards, equipped with grappling irons for boarding, high towers for throwing missiles down upon the enemy, and catapults, ballistæ, and other powerful ancient artillery. Agrippa's ships were the dreadnaughts of the age; while those of Sextus, built especially for the swift operations of piracy, corresponded to our modern cruisers or commerce destroyers. His light craft stood small chance in the battle against their mighty adversaries; and with Agrippa commanding the Roman fleet the result was not long

doubtful. The vessels of Sextus made little impression on the stout sides of Agrippa's galleys; and though they were fought with superb skill and daring, they were caught by Agrippa's grappling irons, overwhelmed by boarders, and totally defeated. One hundred and sixty vessels fell into Agrippa's hands or were destroyed. Sextus with seventeen galleys escaped to Messina, where he embarked with his family and his treasures and fled to the East. His power in Sicily passed immediately to Octavian.¹

SECTION IV. THE CAMPAIGN AND BATTLE OF ACTIUM, 32 TO 31 B.C.

Six years later, after various political mutations, Octavian turned his victorious fleet against his colleague and rival Antony. The sea campaign and battle of Actium which followed established the security of the Roman world and ordered its destinies for four centuries to come.

At the outset of this conflict the sea power of Antony was equal if not superior to Octavian's. The former commanded the naval resources of the Levant and the Black Sea regions — eight hundred

¹ Appian, "De Bellis Civilibus", IV, 82-85; V, 18-120; Velleius Paterculus, II, 72-79; Dio, XLVII, 36, XLVIII, 7-49, XLIX, 1-4; Plutarch, "Brutus", 27; Suetonius, "Augustus", XVI. Sextus was shortly afterwards put to death at Miletus by one of Antony's officers.

Upon Agrippa, says Dio Cassius, Octavian bestowed a golden crown adorned with beaks of ships — a decoration given to nobody before or since.

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warships and transports, manned by the daring and skillful sailors of Greece, Phœnicia, and Pontus. These, together with the boundless riches of the East, were at his disposal. Octavian, after the battle of Naulochus, was the master of six hundred galleys; but though further ships were added in an expedition of Agrippa's against the Liburni, the financial exhaustion of the West had forced Octavian to disband a large part of the fleet.

Inferior to Antony in financial and probably also in naval resources, the strength of Octavian lay in his experience in actual naval fighting, in his prestige from Naulochus, and in the superior leadership which he commanded. His faithful friend Agrippa was a great naval genius, the Nelson of the Roman State. Antony, a good soldier but a mediocre general at best, had no previous experience in naval warfare, was broken with age and debauchery, torn with conflicting interests, and almost wholly controlled by the beautiful, imperious, but mentally contemptible woman, Cleopatra.

It is not surprising therefore that the war was mismanaged by Antony almost from the first. While he was revelling with Cleopatra during the winter of 32-31 B.C. at Athens and Patræ, his crews were allowed to lack for the necessities of life, a third of their number died of famine and disease, and it was necessary to fill their places with peasants, teamsters, slaves, and other landsmen impressed wherever found in Greece. Octavian's fleet, on the

other hand, carefully conserved by Agrippa, had been kept in a state of the highest discipline and efficiency.

In the countries subject to Antony's rule the idea of great ship construction — due to the triumph of Octavian's large vessels at Naulochus — had been carried to an unwarranted, almost ridiculous extreme. Some of Antony's galleys, especially among the Egyptian contingent, were vessels of eight and ten banks of oars, great sea castles displacing possibly a thousand tons burden, and so awkward as to be scarcely manageable.¹ The "dreadnaughts" of Octavian, on the other hand, were of moderate size and susceptible of comparatively easy handling.

Agrippa, furthermore, had introduced into his master's fleet a new class of auxiliary ship known as the Liburnian, the name and model being taken from the vessels of the Liburni, a pirate people of the Adriatic whom he had subdued in his expedition of 35 B.C. Light, swift craft, similar to the cruisers of Sextus Pompey though smaller and stronger built, they were designed to supplement the "dreadnaughts" by scouting and patrol duty, and by harassing the enemy's great ships in action. They roughly corresponded in the ancient world to our modern torpedo boats and destroyers.

¹ On this subject the Roman historian Florus waxes grandiloquent; for, speaking of the great ships of Antony, he says, "Being mounted with towers and high decks, they moved along like castles and cities, while the sea groaned and the winds were fatigued." Florus, IV, 11.

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Early in the spring of 31 B.C., the main war fleets of the rival leaders were concentrated near the promontory of Actium on the southern coast of Epirus. Antony's squadrons rode in the spacious gulf of Ambracia, of whose narrow entrance Actium formed the southern portal; the galleys of Octavian swung at anchor in the port of Comarus a little to the northward. For five months the fleets watched each other across the intervening peninsula, engaging in petty feints and skirmishes but not daring to come to a decisive action.

On land meanwhile events were brewing that were to force matters to an issue. The camp of Antony was split into two factions: the Roman party of senators and nobles who had elected to follow Antony's fortunes, and the Egyptian party of Cleopatra and her followers. The former urged a resolute attack by land and sea on Octavian in Italy. The latter advocated retiring with the main forces to Egypt and making that country the base of a purely defensive campaign. The one was an imperial Roman, the other a narrow Egyptian policy. Drawn to the former by his patriotism and ambition and to the latter by his passion for Cleopatra, Antony had hitherto followed neither but had steered a middle course. He had strung out his army in garrisons on a large arc between Egypt and Epirus, allowing Octavian to confront him in the latter country with a fleet and an army of equal strength.

At last, however, Cleopatra's arguments prevailed ; the enfeebled triumvir was won over and consented to retreat to Egypt. But in order to do this it was necessary to hoodwink the legions who, though devoted to Antony personally, were as staunch in their Roman patriotism as Antony was weak in his. A scheme of infantile cunning was accordingly devised, whereby, under the mask of a naval battle, a general retirement to Egypt was to be effected. "Part of the army was to be sent on board the fleet, other troops were to be dispatched to guard the most important points in Greece ; the fleet should sail out in battle array and should attack if the enemy advanced ; then sail would be made for Egypt. In this way at least half the army, which would be on board the ships, would certainly reach Egypt ; if the eastern contingents and the remaining legions were afterwards scattered the losses would not be serious." ¹

Antony, it would seem, yielded to this hare-brained scheme late in August, 31 B.C., for on the 29th of that month he suddenly gave orders for a naval battle. Such of his ships as it was impossible to man adequately he ordered burned. He embarked twenty thousand legionaries and two thousand archers and slingers on the rest of the fleet, and

¹ Ferrero, IV, 95. I have followed Ferrero's explanation of the causes and motives of Actium ; Merivale ("History of the Romans under the Empire", III, chap. 28) takes substantially the same view, which, it seems to me, is solidly supported by Plutarch ("Antony", 53) and Dio, L, 15.



PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF ACTIUM, 31 B.C.

From an Engraving

sent his own and Cleopatra's treasure secretly on board the flagship at night.

The next day the weather broke and a violent storm raged at sea, making it impossible for three days to put out. But on the evening of September 1st the sea grew calm and Antony prepared to sail the following morning.

Octavian learned from deserters of Antony's intention and took his measures accordingly. Eight legions and five pretorian cohorts were embarked; and at dawn on September 2d his fleet under the command of Agrippa drew up in order of battle three quarters of a mile outside the gulf. Toward midday the squadrons of Antony and Cleopatra stood in dense array through the narrow entrance.

The numbers of the fleets in the battle, according to Plutarch, were five hundred vessels on Antony's side and two hundred and fifty on Octavian's. While the latter figures are probably substantially correct, the former are almost certainly overstated. They represent the total of Antony's warships at the beginning of the war, which by losses in fighting or by voluntary destruction had been reduced to three hundred or less.¹

¹ Great discrepancy exists among ancient writers as to the relative numbers of the fleets. Besides the figures of Plutarch quoted in the text, Orosius (VI, 19) states that Octavian "had 30 ships and 200 of the largest triremes," while Antony "had 80 ships"; the number of Antony's smaller craft he fails to give. According to Florus (IV, 11), Octavian's fleet numbered 400 vessels, that of Antony 200. Ferrero (IV, 98) says — on what authority I have been unable to discover — that Antony at the beginning of the battle had 170 ships of war. Clark

Having debouched from the gulf, Antony drew up his fleet parallel with the shore and awaited the enemy's onset. The latter, however, showed no sign of attacking, and Antony, consumed with impatience, suddenly advanced his left wing at the very moment that a squall of rain blew in violently from the sea, drenching his rowers and throwing them into confusion. Agrippa answered by a movement to outflank Antony's left, forcing the latter to counter by an attack against Agrippa's center. The hostile fleets were thus at length brought into collision.

The diverse characters of the fleets were soon evident. The octiremes and deciremes of Antony, like the huge galleons of the Spanish Armada, were maneuvered with the utmost difficulty, and were formidable chiefly for their bulk and the numbers of their fighting men. They were equipped with ballistæ and other heavy artillery, from which a steady if somewhat uncertain fire was directed, and with high towers from which streams of arrows, darts, and other missiles were rained on the enemy craft beneath. Their thick sides studded with brass spikes defied the ramming of the largest vessels; their decks thronged with veteran soldiery were veritable bastions moving on the deep.

While the larger vessels of Agrippa grappled with Antony's, his light craft, the Liburnians, did yeo-

in his excellent critical thesis on Roman naval history (p. 112) gives the numbers of ships actually engaged at Actium, Octavian 300, Antony 200.

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man's service in harassing Antony's "dread-naughts." Darting in and out, they would sweep away banks of oars, break steering gears, and leave their bulky antagonists crippled and motionless. Often they would be sunk by stones or harpooned by grappling irons thrown from catapults; in which case they would be hauled to the great vessels and overpowered. Often four or five Liburnians would surround and attempt to board and carry a "dread-naught." "The engagement," says Plutarch, "resembled a land fight, or, to speak yet more properly, the attack and defence of a fortified place." The admirals sailed in small boats back and forth behind their lines, delivering orders, encouraging their men, and bringing up reserves wherever needed. The air was thick with arrows, stones, and other missiles. Antony fought like a lion, forgetful apparently of his purposed flight and resuming in battle the ardor of youth. The fight was undecided and fairly even; Antony might perhaps have won a victory, or at least have fought a drawn battle, when suddenly Cleopatra was seen bearing off with her ships to the south. The queen had watched the battle from a great galley in the rear, but at length, unable to bear the suspense, had ordered the sails of her vessel to be unfurled, and signaling the Egyptian squadron to follow her, had fled toward the Peloponnesus. Antony, in despair, thinking this the result of a panic and that the battle was lost, followed wildly after her.

The battle, though decided by Antony's flight, was by no means over. Few of the combatants had noticed his withdrawal; and his veteran legionaries, many of whom had served under Julius Cæsar, fought and died like heroes. In their great galleys, though powerless to take the offensive, they were able for a while to repel attack and defy capture. Octavian and Agrippa finally were compelled to resort to fire. The Liburnians were ordered to sail in close and shower the "dreadnaughts" with flaming arrows and darts; while from the decks of Octavian's larger vessels pots of burning coal and pitch were hurled at the enemy out of catapults and ballistæ. In this way many of Antony's vessels were set blazing; the rest, discomfited and bereft of their leader, fled at the close of the day inside the gulf. More than half of Antony's fleet and twelve thousand men had perished. Octavian's losses are not recorded, but their number is of little moment. For the victory and along with it the sole mastery of the civilized world were his.¹

¹ Dio, I, 3-35; Velleius Paterculus, II, 84-85; Orosius, VI, 19; Suetonius, "Augustus", XVII; Plutarch, "Antony", LVIII-LXVI; Florus, IV, 11.

Because Actium was planned by Antony and Cleopatra primarily as a mask to cover the retreat to Egypt Professor Ferrero says, "Actium must therefore be removed from the list of the world's great naval battles. It was a feint delivered to mask one of the most curious political intrigues, and wholly indecisive. . . ." Ferrero, IV, App., 276.

Professor Ferrero, however, evidently overlooks the fact that the leaders for excellent reasons did not communicate their covert purpose of flight in the battle to their followers, who fought in all earnestness, striving manfully and heroically for victory, which they might perhaps



BATTLE OF ACTIUM

*From Hartwell's "Sea Kings and Naval Heroes," by permission of the publishers, Henry Altman Company,
Philadelphia*

SECTION V. THE IMPERIAL NAVAL ESTABLISHMENT, 31 B.C. TO A.D. 476.

Actium was the last decisive naval battle in ancient history. It transformed the Mediterranean into a Roman lake, swept the last vestige of independent sea power from its shores, and established the *pax Romana* by land and by sea. Henceforth the sole surviving need for a navy was to suppress piracy.

That task — in itself no mean or light one — was performed by the emperors with thoroughness and efficiency. To safeguard the trade routes of the Mediterranean Augustus established soon after Actium a large and permanent naval force. Its two main divisions, commanded by equestrian prefects and numbering two hundred and fifty vessels each, had their headquarters at Ravenna on the Adriatic and at Misenum on the Bay of Naples. To each of these a body of three thousand marines was attached. The *classis Ravennatium*, as the first fleet was called, guarded the Adriatic, the *Ægean*, and the *Levant*. The *classis Misenatium* was responsible for the safety of the whole western Mediterranean. Subsidiary detachments and naval bases were maintained from time to time at Frejus, Palermo, Civita Vecchia, Brindisi, Piræus, Alexandria, and other strategic points. A special squad-

have achieved but for the flight of Antony and Cleopatra. Actium was therefore a great naval victory, great in the number of vessels opposed, in the fury and terribleness of the fighting, and in the tremendous results which flowed from the issue.

ron, the *classis Pontica*, of forty ships, patrolled the waters of the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora. To these must be added a fleet stationed in the English Channel to secure communications between Gaul and Britain, and considerable squadrons employed in the North Sea, on the Rhine, and the Danube, to aid in repelling the incursions of the northern barbarians.¹

Having no real naval power but only pirates to contend with, the Romans of the Empire soon discarded the large, expensive types of warships and used in their places the light Liburnian galley or the swift bireme and trireme. By means of these craft piracy was almost completely extinguished, and the Mediterranean rendered nearly as safe for peaceful traffic as in modern times.

The effect of this security was miraculous. Sea communications become rapid and regular.² Com-

¹ Tacitus, "Annales", IV, 5, "Historia", III, 46; Suetonius, "Augustus", XLIX; Vegetius, V.

² "In fair seasons and with fair winds, the navigation of the ancients, conducted by oars and sails, was speedier than our own till the inventions of the most recent times. We learn that vessels from the mouth of the Tiber could reach the coast of Africa in two days, Massalia in three, Tarraco in four, and the Pillars of Hercules in seven. From Puteoli the transit to Alexandria had been effected with moderate winds in nine days; from Messana in seven, and once even in six. On the other hand, however, if the winds and waves were adverse, the timidity and unskillfulness of the mariners made their voyages extremely slow and uncertain. Cæsar took twenty-nine days to reach the coast of Italy from Sardinia, and the Alexandrian vessel in which St. Paul sailed from the coast of Syria would have wintered in a haven of Crete in the midst of its voyage to Rome. The Romans, indeed, only navigated in the finer parts of the year. The communication between Italy and Spain by water was

merce grew to undreamed-of proportions; every sea from Gibraltar to the Crimea gleamed with the sails of busy merchantmen. Great commercial improvements — artificial harbors and breakwaters, canals, docks, lighthouses — were everywhere undertaken and achieved. The base, the cornerstone, of this fabric was the Roman navy.

As a silent yet powerful force upholding the commercial prosperity and the security of the Mediterranean we must envisage the Roman fleet during the first two centuries A.D. Practically no naval fighting occurred. The short civil wars between the rival emperors were settled by the legions or the pretorians on land, the fleet exerting little or no influence on the results. The most noteworthy naval conflicts were those ghastly *naumachiae* or artificial sea fights which the emperors arranged for the amusement of the populace on the placid Italian lakes. A rare chase of a pirate in the Mediterranean, a brush with barbarian craft in the North Sea constituted the most exciting incidents in the Roman sailor's existence. As often as not his energies were turned to peaceful pursuits, to managing the awnings that protected the spectators in the amphitheaters, to harbor construction, even to roadmaking.

interrupted from the middle of November and only recommenced in March. It took as much as three months to sail from Gades to Ostia in the face of the east winds which prevailed at a certain season." Merivale, "History of the Romans under the Empire", IV, 390-391.

The decay of the Imperial fleet coincided in a general way with the decay of the Empire as a whole. The exact date of its inception cannot be placed; the process itself has been almost entirely obscured. It is certain, however, that from the end of the epoch of the "Good Emperors" to the great barbarian invasions at the close of the fourth century, the navy underwent a series of constantly recurring declines. The galleys were allowed to rot at their moorings, the crews to melt away from neglect, and piracy to overspread the seas. When, in the middle of the third century, the first barbarian inroads took place, the Roman navy apparently was all but extinct. Bands of Franks, after devastating Gaul and Spain, seized on shipping in the southern Iberian ports and descended like a comet on Mauretania. Hordes of Goths and Scythians embarked in flat-bottomed boats and rafts from the Crimea, ravaged the coasts of the Black Sea, and passing through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles spread ruin and desolation over Greece and the Ægean. Though a few well-managed war galleys might have sent their crazy craft to the bottom, virtually no opposition was offered them. Again, in 277 B.C., a body of Franks whom the Emperor Probus had settled near the Black Sea coast seized a fleet in one of its harbors and sailing into the Mediterranean made a long line of descents on the coasts of Greece, Africa, and Sicily. Syracuse was sacked by the hardy barbarians, who finally, having satisfied their appetite for plunder,

passed through the Straits of Gibraltar and coasting along Spain and Gaul regained their ancient homes on the Rhine.

Ten years later (287 A.D.) the island-province of Britain emerged for the first time as a naval power. One Carausius, an officer of Batavian descent, whom the Emperor Maximian had given command of the fleet and naval station at Boulogne to check the raids of the Saxon and Frankish pirates, revolted from his imperial master, and crossing with his fleet to Britain seduced the allegiance of the legionaries and provincials. He immediately set up an independent government, assuming the imperial purple and the title of Augustus. His navy, which was the basis of his power, he took pains to strengthen, while he further secured his position by a close alliance with the pirates. For seven years he reigned supreme in Britain. His fleets rode victorious in the Channel, ravaged the coasts of the continent, and even carried the terror of his name inside the Mediterranean. Though failing in an attempt to extend his empire over northern Gaul, he defeated the naval expeditions which Maximian sent against him and maintained himself successfully against the whole power of the Roman Empire. So formidable did he become in his insular position that the Emperors Maximian and Diocletian were at length constrained to recognize him as their colleague. His power ended only with his life, which was taken by an assassin. Britain soon returned to the Roman

allegiance; but the memory of her independence, of her insular impregnability under her great sea-king Carausius, lived on and germinated in the minds of men.

Under the strong rule of the Illyrian Emperors and the absolute princes who succeeded them, the empire took on a new lease of life, and the navy to some extent shared its revival. The Emperor Claudius II boasted — probably with exaggeration — that he had destroyed three hundred and twenty thousand men of the Goths and two thousand ships. The barbarian sea inroads were checked, piracy was partly suppressed, and trade again flourished. In the reign of Constantine the Great we read of immense fleets and extended sea operations. Both Constantine and Licinius saw the importance of the Hellespont in their struggle for the East, and both equipped powerful navies to control it. A fairly important conflict took place between their fleets in 323 A.D., the result of which helped to determine the issue of the war in Constantine's favor.

Despite such temporary recrudescences, the same evils, the same corruption which was eating away the heart of the body politic were also steadily undermining the naval service. The partition of the Empire into eastern and western divisions initiated the final stage of the downward process. While the renascent commercial activity of the Greeks imparted to the eastern naval establishment a vitality which was to last for many centuries, the decay of

the western fleet became hopeless and irremediable. When the full tide of Germanic invasion set in at the beginning of the fifth century the sea, which should have been a refuge and a stronghold to the Romans, became an open and inviting avenue of invasion. Swarms of Angles, Saxons, Danes, and other Teuton pirates issued from the river mouths of Lower Germany, and sailing in light swift squadrons descended on the coasts of northern France and Britain. Their raids culminated in the landing of Hengist and Horsa on the Isle of Thanet, in 449 A.D., and the establishment of the English kingdoms in Britain.

Southward, another Teuton people, the Vandals, after traversing France and Spain, crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and conquered the rich Roman province of Africa. Under the rule of their king Gaiseric, one of the ablest of barbarian leaders, they turned their energies to shipbuilding, and though strangers to the sea for generations ¹ suddenly emerged a great naval power. Carthage again, after an interval of six hundred years, became the capital of a maritime nation and out of her harbors issued piratical fleets which visited on the Roman populations something of the misery which their ancestors had inflicted on the ancient Punic republic.

Fearless, daring, cruel, insatiably greedy, typical barbarians, the Vandals were the most successful as well as the most care-free pirates of ancient times. "There was a joyous impartiality in their expeditions,

¹ The Vandals originally came from the shores of the southern Baltic.

an absence of any special malice against the victims, a frank renunciation of all attempts to find a pretext, which is thoroughly characteristic of their author. When once his armament was lying in the harbor of Carthage, all ready for sailing, and when the brigand king had come limping down from the palace which had been dwelt in for centuries by the proconsuls of Africa, as soon as he set his foot on board, the pilot asked for orders to what land he should steer. The object of the expedition was the only point which the king had not troubled himself to determine. 'For the dwellings of men with whom God is angry', he said, and left the decision of that question to the winds and waves."¹

Each year with the return of spring, the Vandal king sailed with his fleet from Carthage for some rich seaboard of the Mediterranean. His light-draft vessels skimmed close along shore, landing wherever chance of booty offered. His men carried their horses with them on shipboard and their cavalry scoured the country, carrying off the movable wealth, often the inhabitants themselves, before any force could be mobilized against them. During the thirty-seven years of Gaiseric's reign scarcely a district, scarcely a hamlet of the Mediterranean escaped their ravages; the rich defenceless islands of the Ægean, the littorals of Greece, Illyria, Italy, Provence, even the Atlantic coast of Spain, were ruined by their ceaseless raids. As they were bent

¹ Hodgkin, "Italy and Her Invaders", II, 251-252.

on booty rather than on conquest, they avoided as a rule strong fortified cities but attacked by preference unwallled towns and villages. But they took and plundered the wealthy city of Palermo in 440 A.D., and soon added Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica to their dominions. Their crowning deed, however, for which they are chiefly famed, was the sack of Rome. In June of 445 A.D. Gaiseric and his followers sailed boldly up the Tiber and seized the capital of the Western Empire. No resistance was offered them and for fourteen days Rome was given up to the leisurely and systematic plunder of the barbarians. They loaded their vessels with the gold and silver of the imperial palaces, with precious stones and priceless statues, with rich merchandise and rare furniture, with the plate and ornaments of the churches, including even the sacred vessels and symbols of the Jewish worship which the Emperor Titus had carried away from the temple of Jerusalem over three centuries before. Having crammed their holds with the spoil of the ages the Vandals at length made sail and returned to Carthage.

The sack of the imperial city and the unceasing ravages of the Vandals aroused the impotent wrath of the entire civilized world. Expensive armaments were raised; minor successes were won; but the combined efforts of East and West were nullified by the astute and daring strategy of Gaiseric. Five formidable expeditions were directed against him, but all were either baffled or defeated outright.

In 460 A.D. the Western Emperor Majorian assembled a fleet of three hundred new-built triremes in the Spanish harbor of Cartagena. Before the expedition's equipment was complete, Gaiseric, who had received secret intelligence from traitors in the Roman camp, sailed suddenly into the bay and destroyed the half-manned galleys at their moorings. The preparations of three years were undone in a few hours.

Eight years later a much vaster expedition sailed from Constantinople and the Bosphorus under the banner of the Eastern Emperor Leo. Comprising eleven thousand ships and one hundred thousand soldiers, and costing the immense sum of one hundred and thirty thousand pounds of gold (\$24,250,000), this great armament might easily have subverted the Vandal realm but for the stupidity or the treachery of its Greek admiral Basiliscus. Though holding the pirate king practically at his mercy, he weakly consented to a five days' truce, which gave Gaiseric time to bring up his fireships and launch a night attack resulting in the almost total destruction of the Roman armament.¹

The moral effect of this catastrophe Bury likens to that produced on Europe by the collapse of the Spanish Armada. The civilized world was stunned. "The Roman Empire had put forth all its strength and had signally failed, not against the combined powers of the barbarians but against one barbarian nation."²

¹ Procopius, "De Bello Vandalico", I, 6.

² Bury, "Later Roman Empire", I, 246.

Gaiseric may truly be called the destroyer of the Roman sea power. Under his sledge-hammer blows the last remnants of the western imperial navy crumbled to ruins; Gaiseric himself lived to witness the extinction of the western portion of the Roman Empire. Though the fleets of the Eastern or Byzantine Empire continued to survive for centuries and to maintain some semblance of order in the Levantine seas, the last vestige of organized naval power had disappeared from the waters of the western Mediterranean. Not till the eighth and ninth centuries were the foundations laid of a new and permanent naval system, by the fleets of the Republics of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE: The chief ancient authorities are the detailed histories of Livy, Polybius, Diodorus, Appian, Dio Cassius, and Procopius, along with Plutarch's *Lives* of Antony, Lucullus, Sulla, Pompey, Cæsar, and Brutus. These are supplemented, however, by collections of memoirs and letters, numerous epitomes of the later Roman Empire and special works; all of which have been amply cited in the narrative and are listed in the main bibliography. For guidance in using the above authorities I have relied chiefly on the standard modern histories of Messrs. Schuckburgh, Arnold, Ihne, Mommsen, Duruy, Heitland, Pelham, Ferrero, Merivale, Gibbon, and Bury. I have found of special value Mr. F. W. Clark's doctoral thesis, "The Influence of Sea Power on the History of the Roman Republic" and Mr. H. S. Jones's "Companion to Roman History."



CONCLUSION

THE INFLUENCE OF SEA POWER ON ANCIENT HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION

"We tell you that we (the Athenians), first and alone, dared to engage with the Barbarian at Marathon, and that, when he came again, being too weak to defend ourselves by land, we and our whole people embarked by shipboard and shared with the other Hellenes in the victory of Salamis. Thereby he was prevented from sailing to the Peloponnesus and ravaging city after city; for against so mighty a fleet how could you have helped one another? He himself is the best witness of our words; for when he was once defeated at sea, he felt that his power was gone and quickly retreated with the greater part of his army."

Speech of the Athenian Ambassadors before the Spartan Assembly, 432 B.C.

"The master of the sea must inevitably be master of the Empire."

CICERO, "Ad Atticus."

Having traced the course of naval history in its main lines from the earliest times to the fall of the Western division of the Roman Empire, I now purpose, at the risk of some repetition, to revert and examine summarily the influence of sea power on ancient history and civilization. In seeking to form a true estimate of that influence, I shall be guided in large measure by the opinions of ancient historians, more particularly those contemporary with or close

to the events; for, though later ages may view events in a truer perspective, it is only through the record of contemporary thought and feeling that the events themselves can be visioned, and that the reaction produced by them can be gauged and appreciated.

The influence of sea power on civilization in its earlier stages is necessarily a subject open to wide speculation. That such influence not only existed but was the dominant factor in a great era of human progress, before the time of recorded history, seems likely from the few rays of light shed on the subject by the two eldest of extant historians, Herodotus and Thucydides. Maritime commerce, as the statements of Thucydides particularly indicate — as we may also readily believe from our knowledge of static human nature — was followed almost immediately after its inception by piracy: to protect the trader from the pirate and make possible his prosperity armed sea power or warships were first devised. In the ancient world, however, police protection against piracy was a national rather than an international matter. The warship of one nation coming in contact with the merchant ship of another commonly turned pirate; whole tribes and nations often used their navies or formed them originally for the purpose of plundering. Piracy indeed, Thucydides tells us, was in early ages a recognized and honorable institution.¹ But, as wealth and power increased, as cities were fortified and as war navies developed,

¹ Thucydides, I, 5, 7.

the scourge gradually fell into disrepute and was checked or localized.

The influence of primitive sea power was thus twofold: on the one hand, conservative and constructive; on the other hand, destructive. These two forces are seen in conflict throughout the whole of maritime history; and it is the triumph of civilization that the forces of order and construction have prevailed unto this day.

Descending from the abstract to the concrete, we may say that the early Cretan, Phœnician, Carthaginian, and Grecian navies alone made possible an extensive commerce. Only by the protection of fleets of war could the riches and products of many lands be brought together by commerce for the development of a higher and finer civilization; only through commerce upheld by sea power could the rudiments of civilization, the higher mechanic arts, the alphabet, the art of writing, be disseminated among barbarous or savage peoples over the basin of the Mediterranean. The broadening and enlightening effect upon the human mind of knowledge gained through voyages of commerce and discovery — such as the rotundity of the earth and its revolution about the sun as proved by the Phœnician circumnavigation of Africa — must likewise have been incalculable.

When strong military powers abutting on the Mediterranean came into existence they usually employed navies as auxiliaries to the operations of

their forces on land. Such was the case not only with the great oriental monarchies, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia, which successively made use of the vassal Phœnician sea power, but with the smaller States of Greece. Thucydides is very clear in this matter. Speaking of the growth of strong States in Greece, he says, "Those who applied their energies to the sea obtained a great accession of strength by the increase of their revenues and the extension of their dominion. For they attacked and subjugated the islands, especially when the pressure of population was felt by them. Whereas by land, no conflict of any kind which brought increase of power ever occurred."¹

From the days of Minos of Crete to the great Athenian naval supremacy, a long series of *thalassocracies* or sea rules rose and fell. "Masters of the Sea" is an expression constantly used by Herodotus in his account of this era. Wide sea empires were established over the Ægean and beyond. The sea was made fairly secure, trade flourished, wealth increased, populations teemed, colonies were flung far and wide, and the leaven of Hellenism was spread over the coasts and islands of the Mediterranean as far as Gaul and Spain. All this extension of power, or imperialism, and the reciprocal concentration of wealth for the higher development of the arts and sciences would have been impossible without sea power.

¹ Thucydides, I, 18.

The first tangible example of the decisive influence of sea power in a great historic crisis is seen in the Græco-Persian War. I have endeavored to show clearly and fully in the narrative the relation of the victory of Salamis to the Persian invasion of Greece in 480 B.C.; I shall now adduce the judgments of two great Greeks, the one a contemporary, the other a near contemporary. The poet Æschylus, who himself fought at Marathon, Artemisium, Salamis, and Plataea, says of the Persian defeat at sea, "The naval armament by its overthrow involved in ruin the force on land."¹ Herodotus, much more discursive and reasoned, is none the less clear in his verdict:

If the Athenians, terrified with the impending danger, had abandoned their country, or, if they had not abandoned it but submitted to the power of Xerxes, there would certainly have been no attempt to resist the Persians by sea; in which case the following things would have happened on land. Though the Peloponnesians might have constructed ever so many breastworks across the Isthmus [of Corinth], yet the allies would have fallen off from the Lacedæmonians, not by voluntary desertion, but because town after town must have been taken by the fleet of the barbarians; and so the Lacedæmonians would at last have stood alone, and standing alone, would have displayed prodigies of valor, and died nobly. Either they would have done thus, or else, before it came to that extremity, seeing one Greek state after another embrace the cause of the Medes, they would have come to terms with

¹ Æschylus, "Persæ", verse 730.

king Xerxes; — and thus, either way Greece would have become subject to the Persians. *For I cannot understand of what possible use the walls across the Isthmus could have been, if the king had had the mastery of the sea.* If anyone then should now say that the Athenians were the saviours of Greece, he would not exceed the truth. For they truly held the scales, and whichever side they espoused must have carried the day. It was they also who, when they determined to maintain the freedom of Greece, roused up that portion of the Greek people which had not gone over to the Medes, and so, next to the gods, they repulsed the invader.¹

By their courageous and high-minded conduct in the Persian War, by their overwhelming contribution to the victory of Salamis, the Athenians saved not only themselves and Greece but civilization as it exists to-day. Had the attempt of the Oriental Persian Empire to conquer the Ægean basin succeeded, Greek liberty and Greek genius would have been blighted in the bud. The world would not have owed to a subjugated Greece the heritage of democracy and self-government, nor would an enslaved Athens have produced the Age of Pericles with its creations of art, literature, and philosophy, which still in their spheres inspire and rule the world. Had mankind eventually been saved from Asiatic despotism and led into the way of a higher civilization it would have been through another people and another genius than the Greek.

¹ Herodotus, VII, 139.

Not only did the Athenians by their naval prowess preserve for themselves and the Greek race their appointed rôles in history but they metamorphosed themselves into a new people with a new soul and an intensely vitalized energy. Between the Athens of the sixth century, B.C., the provincial third-rate land power possessing but a small trade and so small a fleet as to be helpless even before the small island-state of Ægina, and the Athens of Themistocles, of Cimon, and of Pericles, a world of difference exists. The mighty genius of Themistocles had breathed his spirit into the people, had awakened and developed undreamed-of ambitions and capacities. Athens, while retaining her ancient power by land, extends her arms across the sea. Ruling the Ægean with an absolute sway, she sends her armaments to the Euxine, to Egypt, and to Sicily. Her trade grows a hundredfold. Fabulous wealth of commerce and of tribute flows within her gates, making for the well-being of her masses and used for the adornment of the city, which, though later shorn of imperial power, wins even from her enemies and conquerors the tribute of respect and admiration, so that the Athenian under Macedonian and Roman rule could truly repeat the words of Aristophanes during the city's prime —

O rich and renowned, and with violets crowned,
O Athens, the envied of nations.



THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS (RESTORED)

From an Engraving

Not only triumphs in stone and bronze but the more abiding works of literature are wrought under the ægis of Athenian sea power. The Greek language, enriched through commercial contact with many dialects and tongues, is molded into the matchless forms of Attic prose and verse.¹ The poets and dramatists, inspired by their country's greatness, compose their mighty pieces for a responsive multitude whom sea-borne wealth has given leisure and capacity for self-culture and artistic appreciation. The philosophy of Socrates and his disciples, with its inquiring spirit and its clarifying, rationalizing influence, prepares the human mind for the reception of the truths of Christianity.

Even more direct and palpable was the influence of Athens' sea power on democracy and self-government. When the semi-aristocratic State in the second decade of the fifth century turned from the land to the sea and became a great naval power, it was forced to resort to its lowest and humblest classes of citizens for the oarsmen and sailors who should man its fleet. Without them the victories of Artemisium, Salamis, Eurymedon — the sea glory and the sea empire of Athens — would have been impossible. As her naval power and dominion waxed, the importance and consideration given to the maritime democracy in the State grew correspondingly; "the common people, the skippers and boatswains and pilots," says Plutarch, "were filled with great

¹ Pseudo-Xenophon, "Polity of Athens", II.

boldness and their privileges increased as against the nobles.”¹ Political power had hitherto resided mainly in the class of well-to-do agricultural landholders, who possessed the means to equip themselves as heavy-armed infantry, and who followed the leadership of the nobles and the knights. The class of *thetes* — poor farmers, landless laborers, artisans, seamen, fisherfolk, etc. — possessed little more influence than a voice in the popular assembly. Led by Themistocles, Ephialtes, Pericles, and other aristocrats who espoused their cause, the *thetes* in the two decades following Salamis won for themselves the balance of political power. Cimon, the great conservative leader, was ostracised by their votes. The Council of the Areopagus, the stronghold of aristocracy, was shorn of its power; the highest offices in the State were thrown open to all freemen; and the institution of pay for public service made it possible for the poor to compete with the rich for office. Thus we have the spectacle, four and a half centuries before Christ, of a free and sovereign democracy based on universal suffrage and equality of opportunity, successfully governing a great empire through its chosen leaders whom it loyally supports yet keeps in perfect control. The heart and soul of this democracy were unquestionably the seamen of the fleets of war and commerce, the merchants, shopkeepers, shipyard workers, and artisans of Piræus. “The democracy of Piræus” became a

¹ Plutarch, “Themistocles”, XIX.

term of reproach and hatred for all the oligarchs and aristocrats of Greece. "It is only just," writes an unknown oligarch of the fourth century in an anonymous pamphlet filled with veiled but bitter irony, whose words however seem fair enough to-day — "It is only just that the poorer classes and the people of Athens should be better off than the men of birth and wealth, seeing that it is the people who man the fleet, and put round the city her girdle of power. The steersman, the boatswain, the pilot, the lookout man at the prow, the shipwright — these are the people who engird the city with power rather than her heavy infantry and her men of birth and quality."¹

Athens was thus the first of the great and free democracies based on sea power and commerce. Yet it would be as false as foolish to contend that her sea power, much less her democracy, were unmixed blessings. Both ultimately declined and perished and their mutual influence was almost as intimate in decadence as in growth. We have seen how the democracy, dazzled by the success of its sea power in the Peloponnesian War, allowed itself to be led away by Alcibiades and committed the tremendous folly of embarking on the Sicilian expedition. As a result of the disaster that followed, both democracy and sea power, after a hard and gallant struggle, were for a time subverted; and though each soon rose phoenix-like from its ashes, neither

¹ Pseudo-Xenophon, "Polity of Athens", I.

recovered its ancient strength and virility. If the political temper of the Greeks militated against the restoration of the Athenian empire in the fourth century, a more fundamental reason is to be found in the weakened fiber of the Athenian people. They were unwilling any longer to make the needful sacrifices, to pay the price of empire in money or in services. Sea power, the essential element in their empire, had lost its hold on their minds and imaginations. By an increasing number of influential Athenians of the fourth century it was regarded with aversion and distrust; the time when Athens had been a sturdy agricultural State was recalled as the "golden age." Socrates, wisest of the Greeks, attributed "the ulcerated and swollen condition of the State" of his day to the policy of Themistocles and the elder statesmen; "for they have filled the city full of harbors and docks and walls and all that and have left no room for justice and temperance. And when the crisis of the disorder comes, the people will blame the advisers of the hour, and applaud Themistocles and Cimon and Pericles, who are the real authors of their calamities."¹ Plato, the great disciple of Socrates, strongly disapproved of naval power and purposely placed his ideal commonwealth at a distance of eighty stadia from the sea. "The sea," he remarks, "is pleasant enough as a daily companion, but has also a bitter and brackish quality; filling the streets with merchants and shopkeepers,

¹ Plato, "Gorgias", pp. 518-519.

and begetting in the souls of men uncertain and unfaithful ways, — making the State unfriendly and unfaithful both to her own citizens and also to other nations.”¹ Isocrates, the political orator and rhetorician, likewise declares that sea power is the cause of all Athens’ misfortunes, the ruin of her democracy, and that her only salvation lay in giving up her naval empire. “We imagine that, if we sail the sea with many galleys and force the maritime cities to send tribute, we have done some notable thing; but we mistake the truth. Nothing of what we expected happens; but enmities, wars and large expense follow such thoughtless enterprises; and this justly, for in preceding times, by filling our hands thus too full, we fell into the utmost dangers. . . . How untractable a thing is that sea power which all desire and which renders delirious those who love it! For it has the disposition of those mistresses, who allure us indeed to love them, but ruin those who continue to adhere to them.”²

These are the opinions of the philosophers, of the high intellectual lights of the day; they exerted a strong sway over the upper and middle classes; they must have had a certain infiltrating, paralyzing influence on the masses. Yet the democracy of Athens instinctively clung to the ideal of sea power, which had been the source of its greatness and the glory of the State. The great democratic

¹ Plato, “Laws”, IV, pp. 704-706.

² Isocrates, “8th Oration.”

leader of the fourth century, Demosthenes, instituted naval reforms, and secured the increase of the fleet by crushing taxes levied on the wealthier citizens. But even Demosthenes was powerless to infuse in the democracy the spirit of the times of Themistocles or revive the fire of the Age of Pericles. Engrossed with the pursuit of wealth or pleasure, the people applauded his eloquence, voted his financial and naval measures, but refused to make the essential sacrifices in the way of personal service. The State came to depend largely on foreign mercenaries for manning its fleets, but was too poor to hire them in sufficient numbers. In consequence, the numerically imposing Athenian fleets of the fourth century are undermanned and inefficient. The once mighty navy of Athens becomes a failing and ineffective force. The people who had broken the might of Persia on the sea and for half a century had defied and humbled the Spartan power, finally succumb to Macedon, a half-Hellenic, half-barbaric State, whose rôle in history hitherto had been little more than a cipher.

Turning to the history of Rome, we find that sea power, though exerting a dominating influence on her foreign policy beginning with the First Punic War, has little or nothing to do with the development of the State prior to that period, and makes no deep impress at any time on the life and institutions of the people. Largely due to geographic reasons, the Latins as a race were not attracted to the sea.

The philosophy of sea power, such as abounds in the writings of the great dramatists, historians, and philosophers of Greece, is conspicuous by its absence in Roman literature. Scarcely a mention of sea power is found in the early and formative periods of Roman history; no overseas colonies like those of Greece are sent out; sea-borne commerce and intercourse with peoples outside of Italy exist only in a very limited degree. The permanent foundations, the main structure of Rome's national life — her constitution, her laws, her indigenous culture — had been wrought long before the first effort of her people to control the sea. Roman democracy, for example — in so far as it may be said to have existed at all — is seen at its best before the First Punic War. Roman republican government and institutions, likewise, are purest and strongest before the establishment of the Republic's naval supremacy.

Had Italy, in addition to her broad plains and her unifying mountain system, possessed, like Greece, a flanking network of inlets, harbors, and clustering islands, the history of the peninsula would have been very different. A swarming population of seamen and traders would have grown up naturally, and a genuine democracy based upon sea power would have been formed, which might have preserved the State for centuries from autocracy and counteracted the corroding influence of imperialism.

Sea power, we may say, far from being a natural growth with the Romans, was fairly thrust upon

them; when achieved, it was accepted almost with reluctance and regret. Checked and threatened by a great maritime nation, they were drawn into a contest for which they had neither liking nor aptitude. The First Punic War, which they waged primarily for the possession of Sicily, soon developed into a contest for the mastery of the sea. Its stupendous character is amply attested by contemporaries and is still the wonder of students of history. By an almost superhuman effort and at the price of incalculable sacrifices, the Romans in a struggle of twenty-four years, exhibiting the greatest fortitude and adaptability, forged the weapon of sea power which the Phœnicians and the Greeks had created and had been slowly fashioning and perfecting for centuries. The result was amply commensurate with the greatness of the effort: not only did Rome acquire naval superiority which in the course of two centuries was converted into absolute supremacy and endured as long as the State retained its vigor — not only this, but the first outworks of a mighty empire were immediately won; Sicily, the Lipari Isles, Corsica, and Sardinia were the direct and tangible fruits of the First Punic War, of the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of brave, unskillful Roman seamen engulfed in the waters of the Mediterranean — a sacrifice that endowed the appellation of *mare nostrum*, “our sea,” henceforth applied by the Romans to the Mediterranean, with a peculiarly true and poetic meaning.

The sea power which Rome won in the First Punic War was the essential factor in the ever-widening imperialism of the State during the two centuries that followed. The series of expansions rapidly succeeding one another and finally embracing with an absolute sway the whole girdle of Mediterranean lands would have been impossible, indeed inconceivable, without an actual or a potential control of that great inland sea.

I have narrated the story of Rome's fleet in the conquest of the Mediterranean lands and in the strife of great Roman leaders for control of the new-won empire. We have seen how, in the titanic struggle with the genius of Hannibal, sea power was the decisive force that turned the scales in favor of Rome and converted what might easily have been national extinction into complete victory. We have seen how in each successive war of conquest Rome's success depended primarily upon her ability to dispatch great expeditionary forces overseas in the face of powerful hostile war fleets, and to maintain communication between those forces and Italy. To do this successfully over any considerable period implied naval superiority and control of the sea.

We have also seen with what careless ease Rome cast aside the instrument of sea power when its need momentarily ceased, and what a price she often paid for its neglect. The fact, however, that the Roman Republican navy was not allowed to sink permanently into decay but was repeatedly, at tremendous

cost, brought up from a state of ineffectiveness to one of superiority shows the importance that the land-loving Romans reluctantly conceded to their fleet, and also their resourceful energy in retrieving success after disasters born of unwisdom.

A great naval battle, Actium, saved the empire from probable dissolution and established the *pax Romana* by land and sea. The consequences that followed were simply incalculable. For the first time in history a single people held absolute sway over the whole Mediterranean; for the first time the peaceful merchant might ply his trade tolerably secure from pirate or hostile war craft. The result was a tremendous commercial prosperity, an outpouring and diffusion of wealth such as the world had never known and which has only been surpassed in comparatively modern times. Through the channels of commerce, upheld by sea power, there flowed into Rome and Italy the arts, the sciences and the literatures of the nations of the eastern Mediterranean, particularly of Greece; this culture, after a slight transmutation by the Latin mind, was handed on, largely by sea-borne commerce, to the barbaric peoples of Gaul, Spain, and Britain. As the conquests of Alexander spread Greek civilization over a large part of Asia, so Roman sea power was largely instrumental in completing the Hellenization of western Europe and in diffusing Roman genius for law, order, and organization over the face of the known world.



THE HARBOR OF OSTIA (RESTORED)

From an Engraving

Historians generally, while acknowledging the assistance of Roman material order and particularly of Roman roads to the spread of Christianity, have failed to recognize the influence of sea power on the propagation of that faith. A casual reading of the Acts of the Apostles, however, shows what a considerable part ships and voyages played in the missionary labors of St. Paul; and as communication in the ancient world was generally easier, cheaper, and more usual by water than by land, it is probable that the majority of the countless journeys of the early Christian missionaries were made on the sea. Thus the Roman seamen who fought to establish the empire's supremacy and peace and security over the Mediterranean, unconsciously prepared the way for the progress of the Prince of Peace.

APPENDICES

*Appendix A*¹

THE GREAT SHIP OF PTOLEMY PHILOPATER OF EGYPT

ATHENÆUS, "The Deipnosophists," V, 37

But since we have mentioned the subject of the building of ships, let us speak (for it is worth hearing of) of the ships which were built by Ptolemy Philopater, which are mentioned by the same Callixenus in the first book of his Account of Alexandria, where he speaks as follows :

Philopater built a ship with forty banks of rowers, being two hundred and eighty cubits² long and thirty-eight cubits from one side to the other ; and in height up to the gunwale it was forty-eight cubits ; and from the highest part of the stern to the water-line was fifty-three cubits ; and it had four rudders, each thirty cubits long ; and oars for the *thranitæ*,³ the largest thirty-eight cubits in length, which, from having lead in their handles, and because they were very heavy in the part inside the ship, being accurately balanced, were, in spite of their bulk, very handy to use. And the ship had two heads and two sterns, and seven beaks, one of which was longer than all the rest, and the others were of smaller size ; and some of them were fixed to the ears⁴ of the ship ; and it had twelve undergirths to support the keel, and each was six hundred cubits in length. And it was well proportioned

¹ See Introduction, pp 5, 6.

² A cubit was the equivalent of $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

³ The *thranitæ* were the uppermost bank of rowers on a warship.

⁴ These were probably the cat-heads or bulwarks close to the bow of the warship.

to a most extraordinary degree; and all the appointments of the vessel were admirable, for it had figures of animals on it not less than twelve cubits in size, both at the head and at the stern, and every part of it was inlaid and ornamented with figures in wax; and the space between the oars down to the very keel had a running pattern of ivy leaves and thrysi; and there was great store of every kind of equipment to supply all parts of the ship that might require any. And when it put to sea it had more than four thousand rowers, and four hundred supernumeraries; and on the deck were three thousand marines, or at least two thousand eight hundred and fifty. And besides all these there was another large body of men under the decks, and a vast quantity of provisions and supplies. And the vessel was launched originally from a sort of framework, which they say was erected and made out of the wood of fifty ships of five banks of oars; and it was launched by the multitude with great acclamations and blowing of trumpets. But after that a Phœnician devised a new method of launching it, having dug a trench under it, equal to the ship itself in length, which he dug close to the harbour. And in the trench he built props of solid stone five cubits deep, and across them he laid beams crosswise, running the whole width of the trench, at four cubits distance from one another; and then making a channel from the sea he filled all the space which he had excavated with water, out of which he easily brought the ship by aid of whatever men happened to be at hand; then closing the entrance which had been originally made, he drained the water off again by means of engines; and when this had been done the vessel rested securely on the before-mentioned cross-beams.

*Appendix B*¹

ANCIENT NAVAL BLOCKADES AND WATER SUPPLY

The following passage, describing an episode in the struggle between Cæsar and Pompey, illustrates the difficulty of an ancient fleet maintaining a blockade off a hostile coast and its dependence on water-supply, like a modern fleet's dependence on coal or oil.

DIO, "Roman History", XII, 48

Meanwhile Antony had arrived [from Brundisium], and Pompey in fear retired to Dyrrachium. While Bibulus [Pompey's admiral] lived, Cæsar's lieutenant [Antony] had not dared even to set out from Brundisium, so close was the guard kept over it. But when that officer, worn out by hard work, had died and Libo succeeded him as admiral, Antony despised him and set sail with the evident intention of forcing the passage. Driven back to land he repelled the other's vigorous attack upon him and later, when Libo was anxious to disembark somewhere, he allowed him to find anchorage nowhere near that part of the mainland. The admiral being in need of anchorage and water, since the little island in front of the harbor, which was the only place he could approach, is destitute of water and harbor alike, sailed off to some distant point where he was likely to find both in abundance. In this way Antony was enabled to set sail, and later when the foe attempted to assail them on the high seas he suffered no damage at his hands: a violent storm came up which prevented the attack, but caused injuries to both sides.

¹ See Introduction, pp. 12, 13 and 35-37.

*Appendix C*¹ANCIENT SEA FIGHTING IN A CONFINED SPACE AND
IN THE OPEN, CONTRASTED

THUCYDIDES, VII, 36

The Syracusans, . . . profiting by the experience which they had acquired in the last sea fight [first sea fight in the Great Harbor of Syracuse] . . . devised several improvements in the construction of their vessels. They cut down and strengthened the prows, and also made the beams which projected from them thicker: these latter they supported underneath with stays of timber extending from the beams through the sides of the ship a length of nine feet within and nine without, after the fashion in which the Corinthians had refitted their prows before they fought with the squadron from Naupactus. [See Thucydides, VII, 34.]

For the Syracusans hoped thus to gain an advantage over the Athenian ships, which were not constructed to resist their improvements, but had their prows slender, because they were in the habit of rowing round an enemy and striking the side of his vessel instead of meeting him prow to prow. The plan would be the more effectual, because they were going to fight in the Great Harbor, where many ships would be crowded in a narrow space. They would charge full in face, and presenting their own massive and solid beaks would stave in the hollow and weak forepart of their enemies' ships; while the Athenians, confined as they were, would not be able to wheel round them or break their line before striking, to which manœuvres they mainly trusted — the want of room would

¹ See Introduction, p. 29 and Part I., p. 103.

make the one impossible, and the Syracusans themselves would do their best to prevent the other. What had hitherto been considered a defect of skill on the part of their pilots, the practice of striking beak to beak, would now be a great advantage, to which they would have constant recourse; for the Athenians, when forced to back water, could only retire towards the land, which was too near, and of which but a small part, that is to say, their own encampment, was open to them. The Syracusans would be masters of the rest of the harbor, and, if the Athenians were hard pressed at any point, they would all be driven together into one small spot, where they would run foul of one another and fall into confusion. (Which proved to be the case; for nothing was more disastrous to the Athenians in all these sea fights than the impossibility of retreating, as the Syracusans could, to any part of the harbor.) Again, while they themselves had command of the outer sea, and could charge from it and back water into it whenever they pleased, the Athenians would be unable to sail into the open and turn before striking; besides, Plemmyrium was hostile to them, and the mouth of the harbor was narrow.

*Appendix D*¹

LAND FORCES IN ANCIENT SEA FIGHTS

THUCYDIDES, VII, 62, 63

From the speech of Nicias to the Athenians before the final battle in the Great Harbor of Syracuse:

We have consulted the pilots about any improvements which seemed likely to avail against the crowding of ships in the narrow harbor, as well as against the troops on the enemy's decks, which

¹ See Introduction, pp. 18, 19 and 26-28.

in previous engagements did us so much harm, and we have adopted them as far as we had the means. Many archers and javelin-men will embark, and a great number of other troops, whom if we were going to fight in the open sea we should not employ because they increase the weight of the ships, and therefore impede our skill; but here, where we are obliged to fight a land battle on shipboard, they will be useful. We have thought of all the changes which are necessary in the construction of our ships, and in order to counteract the thickness of the beams on the enemy's prows, for this did us more mischief than anything else, we have provided iron grapnels, which will prevent the ship striking us from retreating if the marines are quick and do their duty. For, as I tell you, we are positively driven to fight a land battle on shipboard, and our best plan is neither to back water ourselves nor allow the enemy to back water after we have once closed with him. Recollect that the shore, except so far as our land-forces extend, is in their hands.

Knowing all this, you must fight to the last with all your strength, and not be driven ashore. When ship strikes ship refuse to separate until you have swept the enemy's heavy-armed from their decks. I am speaking to the hoplites rather than to the sailors; for this is the special duty of the men on deck. . . . Repel your enemies, and show that your skill even amid weakness and disaster is superior to the strength of another in the hour of his success.

*Appendix E*¹

EXAMPLES OF ANCIENT NAVAL TACTICS AND FIGHTING

I

THE BATTLE OF CHIOS (201 B.C.). POLYBIUS, XVI, 2-15

As the siege [of Chios] was not going on favorably for him [Philip V of Macedon], and the enemy were blockad-

¹ See Introduction, pp. 27, 28 and 30, 31.

ing him with an increasing number of decked vessels, he felt uncertain and uneasy as to the result. But as the state of affairs left him no choice, he suddenly put to sea quite unexpectedly to the enemy; for Attalus expected that he would persist in pushing on the mines he had commenced. But Philip was especially keen to make his putting to sea a surprise, because he thought that he would thus be able to outstrip the enemy, and complete the rest of his passage along the coast to Samos in security. But he was much disappointed in his calculations; for Attalus and Theophiliscus [of Rhodes], directly they saw him putting to sea, lost no time in taking action. And although, from their previous conviction that Philip meant to stay where he was, they were not in a position to put to sea quite simultaneously, still by a vigorous use of their oars they managed to overtake him and attacked, — Attalus the enemy's right wing, which was his leading squadron, and Theophiliscus his left. Thus intercepted and surrounded, Philip gave the signal to the ships of his right wing, ordering them to turn their prows towards the enemy and engage them boldly; while he himself retreated under cover of the smaller islands, which lay in the way, with some light galleys, and thence watched the result of the battle. The whole number of ships engaged were, on Philip's side, fifty-three decked, accompanied by some undecked vessels, and galleys and beaked ships to the number of one hundred and fifty; for he had not been able to fit out all his ships in Samos. On the side of the enemy there were sixty-five decked vessels, besides those which came from Byzantium, and along with them nine *triemioliæ* [light-decked vessels], and three triremes.

The fight having been begun on the ship on which King Attalus was sailing, all the others near began charging each other without waiting for orders. Attalus ran into an eight-banked ship, and having struck it a well-directed blow below the water line, after a prolonged struggle between the combatants on the decks, at length succeeded in sinking it. Philip's ten-banked ship, which, moreover, was the admiral's, was captured by the enemy in an extraordinary manner. For one of the *triemioliæ*, having run close under her, she struck it violently amidships, just beneath the thole of the topmost bank of oars, and got fast jammed on to it, the steersman being unable to check the way of his ship. The result was that, by this craft hanging suspended to her, she became unmanageable and unable to turn one way or another. While in this plight, two quinqueremes charged her on both sides at once, and destroyed the vessel itself and the fighting men on her deck, among whom fell Democrates, Philip's admiral. At the same time Dionysodorus and Deinocrates, who were brothers and joint admirals of the fleet of Attalus, charged, the one upon a seven-banked, the other upon an eight-banked ship of the enemy, and had a most extraordinary adventure in the battle. Deinocrates, in the first place, came into collision with an eight-banked ship, and had his ship struck above the water line; for the enemy's ship had its prow built high; but he struck the enemy's ship below the water line, and at first could not get himself clear, though he tried again and again to back water; and, accordingly, when the Macedonian boarded him, and fought with great gallantry, he was brought into the most imminent danger. Presently, upon Attalus coming to his aid, and by a vigorous charge separating the

two ships, Deinocrates unexpectedly found himself free, and the enemy's boarders were all killed after a gallant resistance, while their own vessel, being left without men, was captured by Attalus. In the next place, Dionysodorus, making a furious charge, missed his blow; but running up alongside of the enemy lost all the oars on his right side, and had the timbers supporting his towers smashed to pieces, and was thereupon immediately surrounded by the enemy. In the midst of loud shouts and great confusion, all the rest of his marines perished along with the ship, but he himself with two others managed to escape by swimming to the *triemiolia* which was coming up to the rescue.

The fight between the rest of the fleet, however, was an undecided one; for the superiority in the numbers of Philip's galleys was compensated for by Attalus's superiority in the number of his decked ships. Thus on the right wing of Philip's fleet the state of things was that the ultimate result was doubtful, but that, of the two, Attalus had the better hope of victory. As for the Rhodians, they were, at first starting, as I have said, far behind the enemy, but being much their superiors in speed they managed to come up with the rear of the Macedonians. At first they charged the vessels on the stern as they were retiring, and broke off their oars; but upon Philip's ships swinging round and beginning to bring help to those in danger, while those of the Rhodians who had started later than the rest reached the squadron of Theophiliscus, both parties turned their ships in line prow to prow and charged gallantly, inciting each other to fresh exertions by the sound of trumpets and loud cheers. Had not the Macedonians placed their galleys between the opposing lines

of decked ships, the battle would have been quickly decided; but, as it was, these proved a hindrance to the Rhodians in various ways. For as soon as the first charge had disturbed the original order of the ships, they became all mixed up with each other in complete confusion, which made it difficult to sail through the enemy's line or to avail themselves of the points in which they were superior, because the galleys kept running sometimes against the blades of their oars so as to hinder the rowing, and sometimes upon their prows, or again upon their sterns, thus hampering the service of steerers and rowers alike. In the direct charges, however, the Rhodians employed a particular maneuver. By depressing their bows they received the blows of the enemy above the water line, while by staving in the enemy's ships below the water line they rendered the blows fatal. Still it was rarely that they succeeded in doing this, for, as a rule, they avoided collisions, because the Macedonians fought gallantly from their decks when they came to close quarters. Their most frequent maneuver was to row through the Macedonian line, and disable the enemy's ships by breaking off their oars, and then, rowing round into position, again charge the enemy on the stern, or catch them broadside as they were in the act of turning; and thus they either stove them in or broke away some necessary part of their rigging. By this manner of fighting they destroyed a great number of the enemy's ships.

But the most brilliant and hazardous exploits were those of three quinqueremes: the flagship on which Theophiliscus sailed, then that commanded by Philostratus, and lastly the one steered by Autolycus, and on board of which was Nicostratus. This last charged an

enemy's ship and left its beak sticking in it. The ship thus struck sank with all hands; but Autolycus and his comrades, as the sea poured into his vessel through the prow, were surrounded by the enemy. For a time they defended themselves gallantly, but at last Autolycus himself was wounded, and fell overboard in his armor, while the rest of the marines were killed fighting bravely. While this was going on, Theophiliscus came to the rescue with three quinqueremes, and though he could not save the ship, because it was now full of water, he yet stove in three hostile vessels, and forced their marines overboard. Being quickly surrounded by a number of galleys and decked ships, he lost the greater number of his marines after a gallant struggle on their part; and after receiving three wounds himself, and performing prodigies of valor, just managed to get his own ship safely off with the assistance of Philostratus, who came to his aid and bravely took his share of the danger. Having thus rejoined his own squadron, he darted out once more and ran in upon the enemy, utterly prostrated in body by his wounds, but more dashing and vehement in spirit than before.

So that there were really two sea fights going on at a considerable distance from each other. For the right wing of Philip's fleet, continually making for land in accordance with his original plan, was not far from the Asiatic coast; while the left wing, having to veer round to support the ships on the rear, was engaged with the Rhodians at no great distance from Chios.

As the fleet of Attalus, however, was rapidly overpowering the right wing of Philip, and was now approaching the small islands, under cover of which Philip was moored watching the result of the battle, Attalus saw one

of his quinqueremes staved in and in the act of being sunk by an enemy's ship. He therefore hurried to its assistance with two quadriremes. The enemy's ship turning to flight, and making for the shore, he pursued it somewhat too eagerly in his ardent desire to effect its capture. Thereupon Philip, observing that Attalus had become detached a considerable distance from his own fleet, took four quinqueremes and three *hemiolia*, as well as all the galleys within reach, and darting out got between Attalus and his ships, and forced him in the utmost terror to run his three ships ashore. After this mishap the king himself and his crew made their way to Erythræ, while Philip captured his vessels and the royal equipage on board them. For in this emergency Attalus had employed an artifice. He caused the most splendid articles of the royal equipage to be spread out on the deck of his ship; the consequence of which was that the first Macedonians who arrived on the galleys, seeing a quantity of flagons and purple robes and such like things, abandoned the pursuit, and turned their attention to plundering these. Thus it came about that Attalus got away safe to Erythræ; while Philip, though he had distinctly got the worst of it in the general engagement, was so elated at the unexpected reverse which had befallen Attalus, that he put to sea again and exerted himself strenuously in collecting his ships and restoring the spirits of his men by assuring them that they were the victors. For when they saw Philip put to sea towing off the royal ship, they very naturally thought that Attalus had perished. But Dionysodorus, conjecturing what had really happened to the king, set about collecting his own ships by raising a signal; and this being speedily done, he sailed away unmolested to their station in Asia. Mean-

while those Macedonians who were engaged with the Rhodians, having been for some time past in evil case, were gradually extricating themselves from the battle, one after the other retiring on the pretence of being anxious to support their comrades. So the Rhodians, taking in tow some of their vessels, and having destroyed others by charging them, sailed away to Chios.

In the battle with Attalus Philip had had destroyed a ten-banked, a nine-banked, a seven-banked, and a six-banked ship, ten other decked vessels, three *triemioliae*, twenty-five galleys, and their crews. In the battle with the Rhodians ten decked vessels and about forty galleys. While two quadriremes and seven galleys with their crews were captured. In the fleet of Attalus one *triemiolia* and two quinqueremes were sunk, while two quadriremes besides that of the king were captured. Of the Rhodian fleet two quinqueremes and a trireme were destroyed, but no ship was taken. Of men the Rhodians lost sixty, Attalus seventy; while Philip lost three thousand Macedonians and six thousand rowers. And of the Macedonians and their allies two thousand were taken prisoners, and of their opponents six hundred.

II

THE BATTLE OF MYONNESUS. LIVY, XXXVII, 29, 30

The following account by Livy of the battle off Myonnesus (190 B.C.), the final and decisive combat between the Roman-Rhodian sea-forces and those of Antiochus, king of Syria, is an example of ancient fleet tactics as affected by the use of fire-ships.

They [the Roman-Rhodian fleet] were between Myonnesus and the promontory of Corycus, when they first got sight of the enemy. The king's fleet, which was

coming in a long line, with only two vessels abreast, then formed themselves in order of battle, stretching out their left division so far that it might enclose the right of the Romans. When Eudamus, who commanded in the rear, perceived that the Romans could not form an equal front, but were just on the point of being surrounded, he pushed up his ships. They were Rhodians, by far the fastest sailors of any of the fleet; and having filled up the deficiency in the extent of the line, he opposed his own ship to the commander's, on board of which was Polyxenidas.

Now the entire fleets in every part were engaged in action. On the side of the Romans eighty ships were fighting, of which twenty-two were Rhodian. The enemy's fleet consisted of eighty-nine ships, and they had the largest rates, three of six, and two of seven banks. In the strength of the vessels and the valor of the soldiers, the Romans had greatly the advantage of the king's party, as had the Rhodians in the activity of their vessels, the skill of the pilots, and the dexterity of the rowers. However, those which carried fire before them were the greatest terror to the enemy: and what was the sole cause of their preservation when they were surrounded at Panormus, proved here the principal means of victory. For when the king's ships, through fear of the fire, had turned aside, in order to avoid at the same time encountering the enemy's prow with their own, they could not strike their antagonist with the beaks, but exposed the side of their ships to his strokes; and if any did venture an encounter, it was immediately overspread with the fire that was poured in; while the men were more alarmed at the fire than the battle. However, the bravery of the soldiers, as is generally the case, chiefly availed in deciding the battle. For

the Romans, having broken through the center of the enemy's line, tacked about and fell upon the rear of the division which was engaged with the Rhodians; and, in an instant of time, both Antiochus's center division, and the ships on the left, were surrounded and sunk. The squadron on the right, which was still entire, was terrified rather by the disaster of their friends, than by any immediate danger threatening themselves; but, when they saw the others surrounded, and Polyxenidas's ship deserting its associates, and sailing away, having quickly hoisted their topsails, they betook themselves to flight (and those steering for Ephesus had a favorable wind), having lost forty-two ships in that battle; of which thirteen struck and fell into the hands of the Romans; the rest were burned or sunk. Two Roman ships were shattered and several were much damaged. One Rhodian vessel was taken by an extraordinary casualty; for, on its striking a Sidonian ship with its beak, its anchor, thrown out by the force of the shock, caught fast hold of the other's prow with its fluke, as if it were a grappling iron thrown in. Great confusion ensuing thereon, when the Rhodians, who wished to disengage themselves from the enemy, pulled back, its cable being dragged forcibly and at the same time entangled with the oars, swept off one side of them. The very ship which, when struck, had grappled with it, took the Rhodian galley in its weakened state. The naval battle of Myonnesus was fought principally in this manner.

*Appendix F*¹

ANCIENT WARSHIPS VERSUS TRANSPORTS

APPIAN, "De Bellis Civilibus", II, 59

Antony embarked the remainder of the army [from Brundisium] and sailed for Apollonia with a favorable wind. About noon the wind failed and twenty of Pompey's ships, that had put out to search the sea, discovered and pursued them. There was great fear on Cæsar's vessels lest in this calm the warships of the enemy should ram them with their prows and sink them. They prepared themselves for battle and began to discharge stones and darts, when suddenly the wind sprang up stronger than before, filled their great sails unexpectedly, and enabled them to complete their voyage without fear. The pursuers were left behind and they suffered severely from the wind and waves in the narrow sea and were scattered along a harborless and rocky coast. With difficulty they captured two of Cæsar's ships that ran on a shoal. Antony brought the remainder to the port of Nymphæum.

APPIAN, "De Bellis Civilibus", IV, 115-116

On the same day that witnessed the battle of Philippi another great calamity took place in the Adriatic. Domitius Calvinus was bringing two legions of infantry on transport ships to Octavius, one of which was known as the Martian legion, a name which had been given to it as a distinction for bravery. He led also a Pretorian cohort of about two thousand men, four squadrons of horse, and a considerable *corps d'élite* of other troops, under the convoy of a few triremes. Murcus and Ahenobarbus met them with one hundred thirty warships. A few of the

¹ See Introduction, pp. 35-37.

transports that were in front got away under sail. The wind suddenly failing, the rest floated about in a dead calm on the sea, having been delivered by some god into the hands of their enemies. The latter, without danger to themselves, fell upon each ship and crushed it; nor could the triremes that escorted them render any aid, since they were hemmed in by reason of their small number. The men who were exposed to this danger performed many deeds of valor. They hastily lashed their ships together with ropes and spars to prevent the enemy from breaking through their line. But when they succeeded in doing this Murcus discharged burning arrows at them. Then they cast off their fastenings as quickly as possible and separated from each other on account of the fire, and thus again were exposed to being surrounded or rammed by the triremes.

Some of the soldiers, and especially the Martians, who excelled in bravery, were exasperated that they should lose their lives uselessly, and so killed themselves rather than be burned to death; others leaped on board the triremes of the enemy, giving and receiving blows. Vessels half burned floated a long time, containing men perishing by fire, by hunger, and by thirst. Others, clinging to masts or planks, were thrown upon barren rocks or promontories, and of these some were saved unexpectedly. Some of them were nourished for five days by licking pitch, or chewing sails or ropes, until the waves bore them to the land. The greater part, vanquished by their misfortunes, surrendered to the enemy. Seventeen triremes surrendered, and the men in them took the oath to Murcus. Their general, Calvinus, who was believed to have perished, returned to Brundisium on his ship five days later.

Such was the catastrophe that befell in the Adriatic on the same day that the battle of Philippi was fought, whether it be more fitly called a shipwreck or a naval engagement.

*Appendix G*¹

NEED OF PREPARATION IN ANCIENT SEA WARFARE

THUCYDIDES, I, 142

From the speech of Pericles to the Athenians, 432 B.C. :

For we [the Athenians] have gained more experience of fighting on land from warfare at sea than they [the Peloponnesians] of naval affairs from warfare on land. And they will not easily acquire nautical skill; even you yourselves, who have been practising ever since the Persian War, are not yet perfect. How can they, who are not sailors, but tillers of the soil, do much? They will not even be permitted to practise, because a large fleet will constantly be lying in wait for them. If they were watched by a few ships only, they might run the risk, trusting to their numbers and forgetting their inexperience; but if they are kept off the sea by our superior strength, their want of practice will make them unskilful, and their want of skill timid. Maritime skill is like skill of other kinds, not a thing to be cultivated by the way or at chance times; it is jealous of any other pursuit which distracts the mind for an instant from itself.

*Appendix H*²

ATHENIAN SEA TRADITION AND SUPREMACY

XENOPHON, "Hellenica", VII, 1

From the speech of the Lacedæmonian ambassador before the Athenian assembly (369 B.C.), advocating an alliance between the two peoples :

¹ See Introduction, pp. 22-24 and Part I, pp. 81-82.

² See Introduction, pp. 22-24.

The preliminary decree of your senate anticipates a division of the hegemony, crediting you with the chief maritime power, Lacedæmon with the chief power on land ; and to me, personally, I confess, that seems a division not more established by human invention than preordained by some divine naturalness or happy fortune. For, in the first place, you have a geographical position preëminently adapted for naval supremacy ; most of the States to whom the sea is important are massed round your own, and all of these are inferior to you in strength. Besides, you have harbors and roadsteads, without which it is not possible to turn a naval power to account. Again, you have many ships of war. To extend your naval empire is a traditional policy ; all the arts and sciences connected with these matters you possess as home products, and, what is more, in skill and experience of nautical affairs you are far ahead of the rest of the world. The majority of you derive your livelihood from the sea, or things connected with it ; so that in the very act of minding your own affairs you are training yourselves to enter the lists of naval combat. Again, no other power in the world can send out a larger collective fleet, and that is no insignificant point in reference to the question of leadership. The nucleus of strength first gained becomes a rallying point, round which the rest of the world will gladly congregate. Furthermore, your good fortune in this department must be looked upon as a definite gift of God : for, consider among the numberless great sea fights which you have fought how few you have lost, how many you have won. It is only rational, then, that your allies should much prefer to share this particular risk with you. Indeed, to show you how natural and vital to you is this maritime study, the following reflection may serve. For several years, the Lacedæmonians, when at war with you in old days, dominated your territory, but they made no progress towards destroying you. At last God granted them one day to push forward their dominion on the sea, and then in an instant you completely succumbed to them. Is it not self-evident that your safety altogether depends upon the sea ? The sea is your

natural element — your birthright; it would be base indeed to entrust the hegemony of it to the Lacedæmonians, and the more so, since, as they themselves admit, they are far less acquainted with this business than yourselves; and, secondly, your risk in naval battles would not be for equal stakes — theirs involving only the loss of the men on board their ships, but yours, that of your children and your wives and the entire State.

*Appendix I*¹

AN ANCIENT NAVAL EXPEDITION: VOYAGE OF IPHICRATES FROM PIRÆUS TO CORCYRA, 373 B.C.

Mnassipus, the Lacedæmonian admiral, sailed in 373 B.C. to Corcyra with a fleet of sixty sail, and landing an army on the island invested the city and laid waste the surrounding country. "The fleet he stationed on the other side of the city, at a point where he calculated on detecting and preventing the approach of convoys. Besides which he established a blockade in front of the harbor when the weather permitted. In this way the city was completely invested."

The Corcyreans, being in sore straits, managed to send word of their plight to their allies, the Athenians, who, after some deliberation, decided to assist them. Under Iphicrates, who had won a brilliant victory on land over the Spartans in 390 B.C., a fleet of seventy triremes was dispatched to Corcyra. Before its arrival, however, the Corcyreans had defeated their enemies and forced them to withdraw from the island. But Iphicrates was able to capture a fleet of Syracusan warships sent to reënforce the Lacedæmonians. Xenophon's description of his voyage from Piræus to Corcyra, coasting from headland to headland and whipping his raw crews into shape as he proceeded, is a fine example of the conditions of classical sea-warfare.

¹ See Introduction, pp. 2, 12, 34, 35.

XENOPHON, "Hellenica", VI, 2

Meanwhile Iphicrates had commenced his voyage of circumnavigation, partly voyaging and partly making every preparation for an engagement. He at once left his large sails behind him, as the voyage was only to be the prelude of a battle; his flying jibs, even if there was a good breeze, were but little used, since by making his progress depend on sheer rowing he hoped at once to improve the physique of his men and the speed of his attack. Often when the squadron was about to put into shore for the purpose of breakfast or supper, he would seize the moment, and draw back the leading wing of the column from the land off the point in question; and then facing round again with the triremes posted well in line, prow for prow, at a given signal let loose the whole fleet in a stoutly contested race for the shore. Great was the triumph in being the first to take in water or whatever else they might need, or the first to breakfast; just as it was a heavy penalty on the last comers, not only to come short in all these objects of desire, but to have to put out to sea with the rest as soon as the signal was given; since the first-comers had altogether a quiet time of it, whilst the hindmost must get through the whole business in hot haste. So again, in the matter of outposts, if he chanced to be getting the morning meal on hostile territory, pickets would be posted, as was right and proper, on the land; but, apart from these, he would raise his masts and keep lookout men on the maintops. These commanded of course a far wider prospect from their lofty perches than the outposts on the level ground. So too, when he dined or slept he had no fires burning in the camp at night, but only a beacon enkindled in front of the encampment to prevent any unseen approach; and fre-

quently in fine weather he put to sea immediately after the evening meal, when, if the breeze favored, they ran along and took their rest simultaneously, or if they depended on oars he gave his mariners repose by turns. During the voyage in daytime he would at one time signal to "sail in column", and at another signal "abreast in line." So that whilst they prosecuted the voyage they at the same time became (both as to theory and practice) well versed in all the details of an engagement before they reached the open sea — a sea, as they imagined, occupied by their foes. For the most part they breakfasted and dined on hostile territory; but as he confined himself to bare necessities he was always too quick for the enemy. Before the hostile reënforcement could come up he had finished his business and was out to sea again.

At the date of Mnasippus's death he chanced to be off Spagiæ in Laconian territory. Reaching Elis, and coasting past the mouth of the Alpheus, he came to moorings under Cape Ichthus, as it is called. The next day he put out from that port for Cephallenia, so drawing up his line and conducting the voyage that he might be prepared in every detail to engage if necessary. The tale about Mnasippus and his demise had reached him, but he had not heard it from an eye-witness, and suspected that it might have been intended to deceive him and throw him off his guard. He was therefore on the lookout. It was, in fact, only on arrival in Cephallenia that he learned the news in explicit form, and gave his troops rest.

I am well aware that all these details of practice and manœuvring are customary in anticipation of a sea fight, but what I single out for praise in the case before us is the skill with which the Athenian admiral attained a two-

fold object. Bearing in mind that it was his duty to reach a certain point at which he expected to fight a naval battle without delay, it was a happy discovery on his part not to allow tactical skill, on the one hand, to be sacrificed to the pace of sailing, nor, on the other, the need of training to interfere with the date of arrival.

After reducing the towns of Cephallenia, Iphicrates sailed to Corcyra. There the first news he heard was that the triremes sent by Dionysius were expected to relieve the Lacedæmonians. On receipt of this information he set off in person and surveyed the country, in order to find a spot from which it would be possible to see the vessels approaching and to signal to the city. Here he stationed his lookout men. A code of signals was agreed upon to signify "vessels in sight", "mooring", etc.; which done he gave his orders to twenty of his captains of men-of-war who were to follow him at a given word of command. Any one who failed to follow him must not grumble at the penalty; that he warned them. Presently the vessels were signalled approaching; the word of command was given, and then the enthusiasm was a sight to see — every man of the crews told off for the expedition racing to join his ship and embark. Sailing to the point where the enemy's vessels lay, he had no difficulty in capturing the crews, who had disembarked from all the ships with one exception. The exception was Melanippus the Rhodian, who had advised the other captains not to stop at this point, and had then manned his own vessel and sailed off. Thus he encountered the ships of Iphicrates, but contrived to slip through his fingers, while the whole of the Syracusan vessels were captured, crews and all.

Having cut the beaks off the prows, Iphicrates bore down into the harbor of Corcyra with the captured triremes in tow. . . .

Having attached to his squadron the navy also of Corcyra, with a fleet numbering now about ninety ships, he set sail, in the first instance to Cephallenia, where he exacted money — which was in some cases voluntarily paid, in others forcibly extorted. In the next place he began making preparations partly to harass the territory of the Lacedæmonians, and partly to win over voluntarily the other States in that quarter which were hostile to Athens; or in case of refusal to go to war with them.

The whole conduct of the campaign reflects, I think, the highest credit on Iphicrates. If his strategy was admirable, so too was the instinct which led him to advise the association with himself of two such colleagues as Callistratus and Chabrias, — the former a popular orator but no great friend of himself politically, the other a man of high military reputation. Either he looked upon them as men of unusual sagacity, and wished to profit by their advice, in which case I commend the good sense of the arrangement, or they were, in his belief, antagonists, in which case the determination to approve himself a consummate general, neither indolent nor incautious, was bold, I admit, but indicative of a laudable self-confidence.

Appendix J

A NAVAL ATTACK BY NIGHT, 388 B.C.

XENOPHON, "Hellenica", V, 1

Meanwhile Gorgopas [Spartan admiral], returning from Ephesus, fell in with the Athenian admiral Eunomus, and, shunning an encounter at the moment, sought shelter in

Ægina, which he reached a little before sunset; and at once disembarking his men, set them down to their evening meal; whilst Eunomus on his side, after hanging back for a little while, sailed away. Night fell, and the Athenian, showing the customary signal light to prevent his squadron straggling, led the way in the darkness. Gorgopas instantly got his men on board again, and, taking the lantern for his guide, followed the Athenians, craftily lagging behind a little space, so as not to show himself or raise any suspicion of his presence. In place of the usual cry the boatswains timed the rowers by the clink of stones, and silently the oars slid, feathering through the waves; and just when the squadron of Eunomus was touching the coast, off Cape Zoster in Attica, the Spartan sounded the bugle note for the charge. Some of Eunomus's vessels were in the act of discharging their crews, others were still getting to their moorings, whilst others were as yet only bearing down to land. The engagement was fought by the light of the moon, and Gorgopas captured four triremes, which he tied astern, and so set sail with his prizes in tow towards Ægina. The rest of the Athenian squadron made their escape into the harbor of Piræus.

*Appendix K*¹

THE DEFENSIVE INVENTIONS OF ARCHIMEDES

In 214 B.C., during the Second Punic War, Syracuse revolted from Rome, and Marcellus was sent to Sicily with a force which besieged it by land and sea. He would probably have subdued the town very speedily but for the ingenious devices of Archimedes, "a man," says Livy, "of unrivalled skill in observing the

¹ See Introduction, pp. 31-33.

heavens and the stars, but more deserving of admiration as the constructor of warlike engines and works, by means of which, with a very slight effort, he turned to ridicule what the enemy effected with great difficulty." (Livy, XXIV, 34.)

POLYBIUS, VIII, 5-8

The Romans who had been informed of the murder of Hieronymus, tyrant of Syracuse, appointed Appius Claudius as Pro-prætor to command a land force, while Marcus Claudius Marcellus commanded the fleet. These officers took up a position not far from Syracuse, and determined to assault the town from the land at Hexapylus, and by sea at what was called Stoa Scytice in Achradina, where the wall has its foundation close down to the sea. Having prepared their wicker penthouses and darts, and other siege material, they felt confident that, with so many hands employed, they would in five days get their works in such an advanced state as to give them the advantage over the enemy. But in this they did not take into account the abilities of Archimedes; nor calculate on the truth that, in certain circumstances, the genius of one man is more effective than any numbers whatever. However they now learned it by experience. The city was strong from the fact of its encircling wall lying along a chain of hills with overhanging brows, the ascent of which was no easy task, even with no one to hinder it, except at certain definite points. Taking advantage of this, Archimedes had constructed such defences both in the town, and at places where an attack might be made by sea, that the garrison would have everything at hand which they might require at any moment, and be ready to meet without delay whatever the enemy might attempt against them.

The attack was begun by Appius bringing his pent-houses and scaling ladders, and attempting to fix the latter against that part of the wall which abuts on Hexapylus towards the east. At the same time Marcus Claudius Marcellus with sixty quinqueremes was making a descent upon Achradina. Each of these vessels was full of men armed with bows and slings and javelins, with which to dislodge those who fought on the battlements. As well as these vessels he had eight quinqueremes in pairs. Each pair had had their oars removed, one on the larboard and the other on the starboard side, and then had been lashed together on the sides thus left bare. On these double vessels, rowed by the outer oars of each of the pair, they brought up under the walls some engines called "Sambucæ" [a high double ladder or tower with a swinging bridge, devised to be let down and allow the marines to cross from the ships to the walls]. . . . This construction got the name of "Sambuca" or "Harp", for the natural reason that when it is raised the combination of the ship and ladder has very much the appearance of such an instrument.

With such contrivances and preparations were the Romans intending to assault the towers. But Archimedes had constructed catapults to suit every range; he so wounded the enemy with stones and darts, from the tighter-wound and longer-ranged engines, as to harass and perplex them to the last degree; and when these began to carry over their heads, he used smaller engines graduated according to the ~~range~~ range required from time to time, and by this means caused so much confusion among them as to altogether check their advance and attack; and finally Marcellus was reduced in despair to bringing up his ships

under cover of night. But when they had come close to land, and so too near to be hit by the catapults, they found that Archimedes had prepared another contrivance against the soldiers who fought from the decks. He had pierced the wall as high as a man's stature with numerous loop holes, which, on the outside, were about as big as the palm of the hand. Inside the wall he stationed archers and crossbows, or scorpions, and by the volleys discharged through these he made the marines useless. By these means, he not only baffled the enemy, whether at a distance or close at hand, but also killed the greater number of them. As often, too, as they tried to work their Sambucæ, he had engines ready all along the walls, not visible at other times, but which suddenly reared themselves above the wall from inside, when the moment for their use had come, and stretched their beams far over the battlements, some of them carrying stones weighing as much as ten talents, and others great masses of lead. So whenever the Sambucæ were approaching, these beams swung round on their pivot the required distance, and by means of a rope running through a pulley dropped the stone upon the Sambucæ, with the result that it not only smashed the machine itself to pieces, but put the ship also and all on board into the most serious danger.

Other machines which he invented were directed against the storming parties, who, advancing under the protection of penthouses, were secured by them from being hurt by missiles shot through the walls. Against these he either shot stones big enough to drive the marines from the prow; or let down an iron hand swung on a chain, by means of which the man who guided the crane, having fastened on some part of the prow where he could get a

hold, pressed down the lever of the machine inside the wall; and when he had thus lifted the prow and made the vessel rest upright on its stern, he fastened the lever of the machine so that it could not be moved; and then suddenly slackened the hand and chain by means of a rope and pulley. The result was that many of the vessels heeled over and fell on their sides: some completely capsized; while the greater number, by their prows coming down suddenly from a height, dipped low in the sea, shipped a great quantity of water, and became the scene of the utmost confusion. Though reduced almost to despair by these baffling inventions of Archimedes, and though he saw that all his attempts were repulsed by the garrison with mocking on their part and loss to himself, Marcellus could not yet refrain from making a joke at his own expense, saying that "Archimedes was using his ships to ladle out the sea water, but that his 'harps' not having been invited to the party were buffeted and turned into disgrace." Such was the end of the attempt at storming Syracuse by sea.

Besides the inventions described as above by Polybius, the historian Dio tells us of another device of Archimedes, which was probably used somewhat later in the siege of Syracuse.

DIO, IX, 4 (Zonaras, Bk. 15)

At last in an incredible manner he [Archimedes] destroyed the whole Roman fleet by conflagration. By tilting a kind of mirror toward the sun he concentrated the sun's beams upon it; and as the thickness and smoothness of the mirror cooperated to ignite the air from these beams he kindled a great flame, all of which he directed upon the ships that lay at anchor in the path of the fire, and he consumed them all.

*Appendix L*¹GALLEYS AND SAILING SHIPS: CAESAR'S COMBAT
WITH THE SEAMEN OF BRITTANY, 56 B.C.

DIO, XXXIX, 40-43

As for Cæsar, he, in the consulship of Marcellinus and Philippus, had made an expedition against the Veneti [Bretons] who live near the ocean. They had seized some Roman soldiers sent out for grain and afterward detained the envoys who came to see about them, to the end that in exchange they might get back their own hostages. Cæsar, instead of giving these back, sent out different bodies of troops in various directions, some to waste the possessions of those who had joined the revolt and thus to prevent the two bands from aiding each other, and others to guard the possessions of those who were under treaty for fear that they too might cause some disturbance: he himself meanwhile went straight against the Veneti. He constructed in the interior boats, which he heard were of advantage for the reflex tide of the ocean, and conveyed them down the river Loire, but in so doing used up almost the entire season to no purpose. Their cities, established in strong positions, were inaccessible, and the ocean surging around practically all of them rendered an infantry attack out of the question, and a naval attack equally so in the midst of the ebb and flow of the tide. Consequently Caesar was in despair until Decimus Brutus came to him with swift ships from the Mediterranean. And he was inclined to think he would be unable to accomplish anything with those either, but the barbarians through contempt for the smallness and weakness of the cutters in-

¹ See Introduction, pp. 35-37; and Part II, p. 180.

curred defeat. For these boats, with a view to rapid progress, had been built rather light in the prevailing style of naval architecture among us, whereas those of the barbarians, because in the constant reflux of the ocean they often needed to rest on dry ground and to hold out against the succession of ebb and flow, surpassed them very much in both size and stoutness. For these reasons the barbarians, never having had any experience with such a fleet, in view of the appearance of the ships believed their effectiveness of no importance; and as soon as they were lying at anchor they set sail against them, thinking to sink them in a very short time by means of their boat-hooks. They were carried by an extremely powerful wind, for their sails were of leather and so received greedily the full force of the wind. Now Brutus for a time paid good heed to that fact and did not dare to sail out against them because of the number and size of the ships and the sweep of the wind and their impetus, but prepared to repel their attack near the land and to abandon the boats altogether. When, however, the wind suddenly fell, the waves were stilled, and the boats could no longer be propelled even with oars but because of their great heaviness stopped almost motionless, then he took courage and sailed to meet them. Falling upon them he wrought them many serious injuries with impunity, using both flank and smashing tactics, now ramming one of them, now backing water, in whatever way and as much as he liked, sometimes with many vessels against one and again with equal numbers opposed, occasionally even approaching safely with few against many. At whatever point he was superior to them, there he stuck to them closely, and some he sank by ripping them open, and others he boarded

from all sides with his mariners for a hand-to-hand conflict, thus slaughtering many. If he found himself inferior at any place, he very easily retired, so that the advantage rested with him in any case. The barbarians did not use archery and had not provided themselves beforehand with stones, not expecting to have any need of them. Hence, if any one came into close quarters with them, they fought him off after a fashion, but with those that stood a little distance from them they knew not how to cope. So that they were wounded and killed, some being unable to repel any one, and some of the boats were rammed and torn open, while others were set on fire and burned; still others were drawn off in tow, as if empty of men. The rest of the crews, seeing this, waited no longer: some killed themselves to avoid being captured alive and others leaped into the sea with the idea that from there they might board the hostile ships, or in any event not perish at the hands of the Romans. In earnestness and daring they were no whit inferior, but grieved terribly at being betrayed by the stationary qualities of their vessels. The Romans, to make sure that the wind when it sprang up again should not move the ships, applied from a distance long poles fitted with knives, by means of which they cut the ropes and split the sails. Through the circumstance that the enemy were compelled to fight a kind of land battle in their boats against a foe conducting a naval battle, great numbers perished there and all the survivors were captured. Of these Cæsar slew the most prominent and sold the rest.

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